Naturally Speaking

Cross family VALLEY ADVANCE

Artist, stone carver brothers

9/21/82

By HAROLD ALLISON

IN THE ROLLING HILLS of Orange County is a tranquil country cemetery in whose peaceful confines lie the remains of two of Hoosierland's most gifted, yet little-known citizens. While lacking in reputation, they nevertheless have left a lasting legacy of art work that spans Indiana and the entire United States.

These two men were brothers, Henry and Ferdinand Cross, and both were masters of their chosen professions. Ferdinand was a craftsman who fashioned works of art from blocks of limestone, while Henry recorded on canvas with paint and brush some of the most famous men and events in American history.

The Cross brothers were natives of New York State, and Ferdinand apparently came to southern Indiana around 1886 and settled in a remote section of Orange County about three miles east of French Lick.

Cross built himself a house on a hillside overlooking a small limestone cave and in this sylvan setting he began to create a wealth of sculptural masterpieces. Such varied objects as cows, owls, monkeys, birds of prey, snakes, turtles, and sundry items materialized from his talented hands. Before long his fame began to spread all over southern Indiana.

One of the specialties of Ferdinand Cross was the crafting of ornate tombstones and monuments that came to grace many of the cemeteries of south-central Indiana. Many of these monuments remain as a testimonial to the genius of this gifted worker of stone.

WHILE FERDINAND PURSUED his career in stone sculpture in Indiana, Henry ventured west to seek his fame and fortune. He spent a number of years touring the then "wild west," seeking out the famous and memorializing their likeness on canvas.

He met and painted such western luminaries as Wild Bill Hickok, Buffalo Bill, Kit Carson and Jim Bridger. The American Indian was also a favorite of Cross, and he painted a rogues' gallery of famous and infamous Indians. A collection of 135 of Cross' paintings are featured in the Gilcrease Museum in Tulsa, Okla., and apparently are a prized part of this museum's art collection.

Henry Cross also painted such famous men as Abraham Lincoln, Brigham Young, U.S. Grant, King Edward the Eighth of England, and President Diaz of the Republic of Mexico. His most famous painting however, has passed down to us through numismatic reproduction.

In one of Cross' paintings a buffalo was featured standing at the edge of a steep cliff, gazing forlornly out into the distance where a group of Indians were making their way across the apparently endless expanse of prairie. This character of a bison was so lifelike and moving that it was used on the buffalo nickel that was minted in the early 1900s. Many a Hoosier has jingled a handful of these coins without realizing that the man who originally painted this bison had Indiana roots.

Ferdinand Cross died in 1912 and was buried in the Sulphur Creek Church Cemetery, a mile or so east of the old Cross home site. Henry had requested that he be buried beside his brother, so upon his death in 1918 his body was brought back to Indiana and interred next to his beloved brother.

AN INTERESTING STORY has developed about the Cross brothers grave site. To show the esteem his fellow stone carvers held for Ferdinand Cross, a lovely limestone memorial was crafted by some of his fellow stone carvers and placed at the grave. A chain extends around the top of the monument and, so the story goes, one of the links broke after it was placed in the cemetery. After Henry was buried another link in the chain broke and both of these broken links are quite visible to visitors to the Cross grave site.

I am trying to find and record all the old Cross sculptures, monuments and paintings still in existence in Indiana, so if you know of one of these apparently-scattered works of arts; please contact me at R.R. 4, Washington, Ind., 47501. Your help would be greatly appreciated.

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Naturally Speaking

THE VALLEY ADVANCE 9/14/82
Cross family

The return to Cross Cave

By HAROLD ALLISON

TO RETURN to the scene of one's childhood is often a touching and moving experience. Old feelings and memories are often revived, and nostalgia floods over a person like breakers upon a rocky sea coast. I was recently a part of such an event.

Mrs. Loma Andrew, a pert and vivacious native of French Lick, spent her childhood a few miles east of French Lick near a cave that holds a lot of historical and natural interest. Known as Cross Cave, this site was once the home of Ferdinand Cross, who acquired quite a name for himself as a master stone carver.

Norbert Lueken of Jasper arranged for Loma to accompany us to the cave, so a few weeks back Norbert, his daughter and her husband, Debbie and Steve Lannen and Julius Buettner, who probably deserves the sobriquet of "Mr. Dubois County History," ventured to French Lick and escorted Loma back to the scene of her childhood.

The Cross Cave is now under the ownership of Dow and Phebe Birkhimer, and they had graciously given us permission to visit the cave. Birkhimer even drove his truck across his hillside pasture to an old road that leads back to the cave, so we would not have to walk the entire distance.

Norbert had brought a wheelchair in case Loma found the quarter-mile walk back to the cave too exhausting, but he soon found out she intended to walk, and walk back to the cave she did.

It had been 64 years since Loma had been to Cross Cave, but her memories of a childhood spent roaming the fields and woods near the cave, and of trips down to a nearby cave known as Butler Cave, where the Cross's used to keep their milk and butter, were as vivid as yesterday.

She recalled the site of the old Cross house where Ferdinand once resided and where in 1912 she found his lifeless form still sitting in a chair on his porch. He had already gone to meet his Maker.

The old Cross house was apparently quite an imposing structure back in its day and it is hard to visualize this now heavily wooded area was once the home of one of southern Indiana's master craftsmen.

Cross Cave itself is a cavern that winds for some distance back into the wooded Orange County hills. Over the years a story has somehow materialized that Cross carved a number of statues and figurines back in the cave, but this story is just a legend. There are no carvings and, according to Loma and Birkhimer, there have never been any back in the cave.

Cross however, did carve a life-size cow and calf and a large basin, which he called Jacobs Well, below the cave and perhaps this is where the story of carvings inside the cave originated.

While Loma, Mrs. Birkhimer and Julius rested outside the cave, Norbert, Debbie, Steve, Dow and I explored the passageways of the cavern. While the cave is really not a spectacular one, it nevertheless does have some interesting features, including a bent columnar stalagmite-stalactite that is very unique.

Cross for several years used his cave as a commercial enterprise. With the statues below the cave entrance and a nearby hillside that features painted stones aligned into a biblical passage and illuminated by bricks soaked in kerosene and hung in surrounding trees, I'm sure Cross Cave was once an imposing spectacle.

After leaving the cave and the Birkhimers, who had proven to be most gracious hosts, we visited Sulphur Creek EUB Church and cemetery where Ferdinand and his brother Henry, who was a noted artist, are buried. It was from one of Henry's paintings that the image of a buffalo was taken which was used on the old buffalo nickle. The story of the Cross brothers will be featured in a later column.

After our excursion we returned Loma to her home. As she left us she wistfully stated that this had been one of the most memorable days of her life and one she would never forget. I'm sure we all agreed the homecoming also had been for us a day we would not soon forget.

AN INDIANA CAVE--Drawing from the Indiana Geological Survey, Department of Natural Resources.

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1766. CROSS. S. B. C., May 7, 1921. Am sorry I cannot answer your question in a very satisfactory manner. However, I will give you such data as I have and it may be of some help. You asked if a Sally Cross, born 1772, died 1835, married, 1796, Reuben Thurston, was a daughter of Nathaniel Cross of Exeter, N. H. Here are the various items I have which might apply. Nathaniel Cross of Exeter, N. H., came through the woods with two of his sons to Belmont, Me., about the year 1800, and took up some land, went back to Exeter, and taking cold on the way, died before the next spring. Early the next summer his widow took part of the children and their household goods on a sled and traveled by spotted trees to Belmont and settled there. In 1820 a child was born into the Robinson family named Timothy Robinson, and in later life he wrote a history of the town of Morrill, this being a part of the town of Belmont which had separated, and being that part of the town in which the Cross family had settled. You can see that the data which Mr. Robinson gathered may be said to be almost first-hand. In his history this is what he has to say about the Cross family: "The poet gives the names of the family. Dud and Sal, Ett and Nat. Dave and Joe, Bob and Pat, Bill and Sie. Clara and Smith, Bose and the Cat." There is some little uncertainty whether the first name is Dad or Dud; however the second letter is not closed at the top, and several persons have expressed themselves as believing the word is Dud.

A cousin of mine told me she remembered of hearing her father speak many times of his uncle Dud or Dudley, but she wasn't quite sure just where the relationship came in. The real names of the above people are as follows: Dudley or Dad; Sally; Etta or Harriet; Nathaniel; David; Joseph Warren; Robert; Martha (Patty); William; Josiah; Clara; and Joshua Smith Cross. Joseph Warren Cross was my great-grandfather, and I got these names from his children. Mr. Robinson says: "Sally, Etta and Nathaniel never came here (Belmont) to live." The History of North Bridgewater, Mass., gives a full account of the descendants of Nathaniel Cross, Jr., but adds nothing to our knowledge of Nathaniel, Sr. Nathaniel, Jr., also had a son whom he named Joseph Warren Cross, and some data about him may be found in the Danforth Genealogy, page 105, and also in the Andover Theological Seminary Year Book for 1808-1809, page 148. A grandson's wife of the Joseph Warren Cross who settled in Belmont wrote a letter in 1921 in which she said her great-grandfather was Nathaniel Cross, born in Stratham, N. H. (this town was possibly a part of Exeter in early times), and that a maternal ancestor was Sarah Anstruss Levett (or Swett, the writing was somewhat illegible). I do not think this person was ever in or near Exeter or Stratham, N. H., and so the mention of the names Sarah and Anstruss seemed significant, as the Thurston Genealogy gives an Anstress Cross, born in Exeter, N. H., Nov. 3, 1775, died Jan. 5, 1851, married, Aug. 25, 1792, Oliver Thurston, son of Oliver and Sarah (French) Thurston.

The History of Exeter, N. H., gives the marriage of the above, and also Sarah Cross on Nov. 19, 1796, to Reuben Thurston. Whether the Sarah and Anstruss who married the Thurstons could have been the Sally and Etta who did not come to Belmont with their mother I do not know. However, they would have been old enough to have stayed in Exeter. And Nathaniel Cross, Sr., would have been old enough to have had children born when these children were. I do not know how old he was when he died, but the History of Morrill, which I have quoted, says that Martha, widow of Nathaniel Cross, died Oct. 9, 1840, aged 89 years. This would give her a birth date of about 1751. If she was perhaps married about 1772 or 1773, she could have been the mother of Anstruss, born 1775, Sarah born a year or two later (she married 1796), Nathaniel, born 1779 (he was the one who went to North Bridgewater), Dudley, baptised in Ipswich, Mass., Sept. 17, 1780, and the rest of the family, all of whom, so far as I know, were born later. The baptism of the above Dudley, son of Nathaniel, may be found in Essex

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319. 2. CROSS. M. F. H., Feb. 20, 1924. Your answer to my article published in the Boston Transcript Jan. 28, 1924, noted, but I wonder if we are not talking about descendants of two different families, as the data I gave in my article can hardly be wrong, as they are copied from vital records, reënforced by town histories. The latter may sometimes be wrong, but the vital records are considered just about the last word in authenticity. I will not take up the space to repeat what I wrote in the other article; if you have it before you, you can refer to it. You seem to question the statement that John, Parker, Jesse and Thomas Cross of Northfield, N. H., were brothers, and say that Stephen and John Cross were brothers who resided in Canterbury, N. H., which included the present town of Northfield. If you will look in the second paragraph of my article in the Jan. 28 paper you will notice that the children of Thomas Cross and his wife, Sarah Boardman, are given and among them are Stephen, baptized in Ipswich, May 24, 1724, and John, baptized in Ipswich, Sept. 29, 1728. These are evidently the Stephen and John who went to Canterbury, N. H., brothers. Stephen first went to Haverhill, Mass., to live, and both of his marriages may be found in the Haverhill vital records. The births of his children may be found in Haverhill vital records, as given in my article, and it mentions specifically that the children were born to Stephen and Hannah (Guild) Cross, so that there cannot be any question on that subject. The names given are Hannah, Stephen, Anne, Sarah, Jesse, Thomas, Elizabeth, Mary. By his second wife he had Phebe and Ephraim as I gave them. If we turn now to the "History of Northfield, N. H.," we will find it was written by Lucy R. H. Cross, and being a Cross, it seems as if she must have been familiar with the Crosses of her home town. Anyway, she is supposed to have gotten her information of the family of Stephen Cross and his descendants from Oliver L. Cross, Esq., of Northfield, who was a great-grandson of Stephen Cross. This Stephen Cross may be the son of the emigrant to Canterbury. But what I wish to say is this, that the data as given in the "History of Northfield" agree in every particular with the data as given in the vital records of Haverhill, Mass. Now you say that the children of John are Molly, John, Phebe, Parker, Jesse and Thomas, and among the children which I gave as the children of Stephen were Jesse Thomas Mary (or Molly) Phebe, Parker and John. The birth dates as given by you were, Molly, born 1750; John, born 1752; Phebe, born 1754; Parker, born 1756; Jesse; Thomas, born 1760, all born in Haverhill, Mass., but I do not find mention of the births or baptisms of any of these children in the Haverhill records excepting the baptism of Phebe, Nov. 10, 1754. I do not mean by that, that they were not born there, simply that the births were not recorded. Now the births for these same names as given by me were Jesse, born 1754; Thomas, born 1757; Mary, born 1762; Phebe, born 1767; and the "History of Northfield" calls Parker and John brothers of this familly. In part 1, page 117, I will quote: "The four brothers by the name of Cross were in town very early. On the Crosses they had some verses running in this wise: Cooper Jess and Merchant Tom, Honest Parker and Farmer John," and on page 118: "These Crosses had a sort of village down at their place on the Intervale." In part 2, page 68, it says that Stephen Cross came from Newbury to Boscawen, and bought land, and that he married Hannah Guild, or Gile, and that some of their children remained in Newbury and Haverhill when the parents came to Northfield. It also says that Stephen married, second, Hannah Marsh. Here I will quote: "His sons John, Parker, Jesse and Thomas, became the founders of the 'Cross Settlement,' the first business houses in town, on the Merrimack Intervale." Now I think it evident that the list of children as given by you were the children of John, a brother of Stephen, whose children were the list that I gave, as the birth records were different, and it would seem as if there were two sets of children by the names of John, Parker, Jesse and Thomas in Northfield at the same time, because the Haverhill vital records and the History of Northfield state positively that these were the children of Stephen, while you have family records that these were the children of John. The emigrant, Stephen, was quite active in the buying and selling of real estate, and quite a long list of deeds are mentioned in the History of Northfield, and it is possible, if one had access to the wills and deeds of the family, it would settle the question. As this is not my family, I do not care to spend the money to buy copies of wills and deeds, but it would be very interesting to have the question settled. I agree with you that there may be a mixup in the children in some way, but of course, as long as the records that I have quoted are considered unassailable as they are, why, it will be up to you to bring in proof as convincing, of the records as you state them. If the History of Northfield is in error, I think it will be a splendid thing for you to show the proof, as all any of us want is the truth of the matter. I will be most happy to help all I can to straighten out these records. E. H. M.

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Institute Historical Collections, volume 55, among some records which were taken from the books of the First Congregational Church of Ipswich, and which were not included in the published Vital Records; that is what it says in the reference given. It seems probable that Nathaniel Cross was a descendant of the first Robert Cross of Ipswich, and I have thought it possible that Nathaniel lived in Ipswich when some of his earlier children were born. However, there was a Nathaniel Cross living in Exeter, N. H., July 9, 1776, on which date he signed a petition from the Freeholders and Inhabitants of Exeter to the Committee of Safety.

I find in looking over my notes that I forgot to mention that the grandson's wife of Joseph Warren Cross mentioned above was also a descendant of Nathaniel Cross, whose son Joseph Warren Cross married Lucy Jackson, and whose daughter Martha Cross married Samuel Jackson, brother to Lucy, and then Samuel Jackson's grandson married Joseph Warren Cross's granddaughter. So far as I know there was no other person by the name of Cross who could have been the father of Sarah and Anstruss Cross of Exeter. General Ralph Cross and his brother Stephen Cross had property in Exeter, I believe at some time, but their children's births seem to have taken place in Newbury and Newburyport, Mass., and the Stephen Cross who married Hannah Guild and went to Northfield, N. H., had children born in Haverhill, Mass.

To sum up, there does not seem to be any other Cross to be the father of Sarah; Nathaniel Cross of Exeter had a daughter Sarah who did not come with her mother to Belmont; Nathaniel Cross's great granddaughter had the names of Sarah and Anstruss in her mind as an ancestor; Nathaniel was old enough to hav. had this Sarah, and there did not seem to be any other Cross family in the town at the time. However, I do not know for a fact whether Sarah was a daughter of Nathaniel or not, but you may get a clue from the above data, and if you should do so, I would be very grateful if you would let me have what information you may get, as I hope to publish a little pamphlet sometime about Nathaniel Cross and his descendants. I hope that I may have something also to publish about his ancestors. E. H. M.

1738 CROSS. N. R. F., April 30, 1924. Stephen Cross, son of Thomas and Sarah (Boardman) Cross, born May 24, 1724, at Haverhill, Mass., married, July 3, 1746, Hannah Guile. Removed from Haverhill to Canterbury, N. H., about 1770. Resided in part now included in Northfield. Their second child, Stephen Cross, Jr., born Feb. 7, 1748-9 at Haverhill, Mass., married Peggy Bowen, and resided in Salisbury. M. F. H.

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1766. CROSS. E. H. M., Dec. 15, 1924. Thank you for your kind reply to my Cross query. Have been trailing Sally Cross for several years, with the same result that you have given, no proof that she was the daughter of Nathaniel. The Federal Census of Exeter, 1790, stated that he was the only head of family by that name in Exeter; he had at that date one son over sixteen years, and six sons under that age, and four females in his family. I have his birth 1740; death, spring of 1801 in Exeter. His wife Martha ———, born 1751, died Oct. 9, 1840, aged eighty-nine years. I am trying to establish a Revolutionary service for him, but have been unable, though he was of the right period; his son, Captain Nathanial, of Bridgewater, was in battle of Saratoga, and at surrender of Burgoyne. S. B. C.

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319. 2. CROSS. E. H. M., May 12, 1924. I thank you for the notes on Stephen Cross. As Benjamin Dutch married Sarah Cross, 1702, and had a son Stephen, baptized 1716, I have supposed the wife was daughter of Captain Stephen Cross. Can you give the name of wife of George Cross of Chebecco, tell when he married her, and give list of their children? Could this George have been born later than 1660, say about 1666, and son of Captain Stephen (2) Cross? As Stephen married Elizabeth Cheney about 1665, and no children accounted for until 1680 (birth date of Sarah (Cross) Dutch), it seems to me several children could have been born 1665-1680. Anna Cross married James Fuller, he born 1682. Do you know her parentage? I have a note that says Robert (1) Cross had a daughter Ann (2), born about 1650, she married Ephraim Fellows. There was a Mary (2) Cross, born June 14, 1640 (see vol. 68, page 201, of New England Historical and Genealogical Register). She married Ephraim Herrick. G. O. F. C.

Special Collections Cross Family

319. 2. CROSS. G. O. F. C., March 3, 1924. You ask for a list of the children of Captain Stephen Cross, who married Elizabeth Cheney, and whether it was their daughter, Sarah Cross, who married Benjamin Dutch of Ipswich, Mass., Jan. 7, 1702. As I suppose you know, early Cross records are in a very chaotic state, and I do not have nearly all the records there are, but still, I have been looking for ancestry for Nathaniel Cross of Exeter, N. H., for a number of years, and I have a good many records of different Cross lines, I suppose not any of them complete. Here is what little data I have concerning Captain Stephen Cross. As I said in an earlier article in the Boston Transcript, he was the son of the first Robert Cross, and his wife Ann or Hannah Jordan. Captain Stephen Cross was born about 1646 or 1647, and died before 1705. About 1665 he married Elizabeth Cheney, and resided on Cross Island, which he owned. He was a mariner. I only have the names of two of his children, Nathaniel, born April 2, 1686, and died April 15, 1686; and John, born about 1688. Authority for the latter son is "Hammett Papers," which mentions that on Jan. 22, 1704-5, "Banja" Dutch, saddler, was appointed a guardian for John Cross, son of Stephen Cross, said John being a minor. He was about 17 years old. George Hart and Thomas Norton went as sureties. I have not the name of Sarah as a daughter of Captain Stephen Cross, but if she was, it would be the most natural thing in the world for John's sister's husband to be appointed a guardian for John. Captain Stephen Cross was a very adventurous spirit, and his conduct must have been very shocking to the staid, Puritanical people of the day. When he was only 17 years old he was one of a crowd of boys who dug up the skeleton of the Indian Sagamore, and carried the skull through the streets on a pole, while at another time, he got up an exciting fist fight on the Sabbath day. At another time he affronted the Court. He commanded a company in the expedition to Quebec, but previously to that he had been master of the sloop Adventure, engaged in coastwise trade. He was very prosperous. Part of the above data is from "Ipswich in the Massachusetts Bay Colony," volume ii, page 73; some from "My Children's Ancestors," by Cross; some from Ipswich Vital Records, and some from various papers and histories. E. H. M.

ANSWERS

319. 2. CROSS. E. H. M., Jan. 28, 1924. To correct the errors in Cross data as given by various authorities, I will copy from my notes taken down in several years of research. Authority for relationship is a grand-daughter of Parker Cross, yet living and of perfect mind and memory.

Stephen and John Cross, brothers, resided in Canterbury, N. H., prior to 1770. I place John as identical with that John Cross who married, at Plaistow, N. H., Nov. 11, 1749, Phebe Parker daughter of Thomas and Bethiah (Simonds) Parker, born Feb. 24, 1732. Their children were: Molly, born Haverhill, Mass., 1750, married, at Methuen, Mass., Oct. 12, 1771, Philip Mitchell, resided Andover, N. H. She died June 24, 1838, had seven children: John, Jr., born about 1752, at Haverhill, died Greensboro, Vt., aged nearly one hundred years. He was a Revolutionary soldier, married Oct. 31, 1782, Nancy Moors. He resided at Northfield and Andover, had nine children, a grand-daughter, Mrs. Judd, recently died at Laconia, very aged, but memory was unimpaired, and gave me valuable information; Phebe, baptized Nov. 10, 1754, Haverhill, died at Andover, N. H., 1802, married Captain Josiah Scribner, resided Andover, had ten children.

Parker Cross, born June 8, 1756, died Jan. 10, 1815. He was a Revolutionary soldier, married —— Abigail Marston about 1780. She died Nov. 5, 1815. He resided in Andover until about 1785 when he removed to Northfield to care for his mother, after his brother Thomas removed to present town of Wilmot, N. H. They had eleven children, nine of whom were born at Northfield. Family is not given a notice in Northfield history. Jesse, whose birth death wife or children I never found; Thomas, born Aug. 30, 1760, at Haverhill, Mass., died Oct. 28, 1829, at Wilmot, N. H. In 1790 census given as a resident of Kearsarge Gore, now Wilmot. Thomas Cross, son of Stephen, given as resident of Northfield same time. He was a Revolutionary soldier. His marriage intentions at Haverhill, Mass., May 21, 1784, to Mercy Merrill, born Sept. 1, 1766, at Haverhill, died at Wilmot, N. H., June 24, 1826. Canterbury, N. H., included present town of Northfield. He had nine children, first two born Northfield, remainder at Wilmot. Hon. Ezra Stearns and others have mixed these families. If there were other children, they escaped me. M. F. H.

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319. 2. CROSS. M. H. E., Dec. 13, 1922. I have been working for a good many years on the Crosses of the New England States, in hopes of finding the ancestry of one Nathaniel Cross, who was living in Exeter, N. H., about the time of the Revolution, and whose descendants went to Belmont, Me., about 1800. In the course of my search an old gentleman gave me the following data, in hopes there might be a clue for me in them. If you wish more data, or more references, I believe I can get them, as he died recently, and left all his records to a genealogical library in a nearby city. You ask for the parents of John, Parker, Jesse, and Thomas Cross, who settled in Northfield, N. H., about 1770. According to this record, which was given me, they are the sons of Lieutenant Stephen Cross by two wives. Stephen was baptized in Ipswich, Mass., May 24, 1724, and was buried in Northfield, N. H. He married first, in Haverhill, Mass., on July 3, 1746, Hannah Guild, or Gould as I have it. The Haverhill vital records give it as Guild. He married second, in Haverhill, Mass., Dec. 9, 1765, Hannah Marsh of Londonderry, N. H. By his first wife he had: Hannah, born July 3, 1747; Stephen, born Feb. 17, 1748-49; Anne and Sarah, twins, born April 22, 1751; Jesse, called twin in the vital record, born Dec. 2, 1754; Thomas, born May 12, 1757; Elizabeth, born Sept. 15, 1759; and Mary, baptized Jnue 27, 1762. By his second wife he had Phebe, baptized Jan. 23, 1767, and Ephraim, baptized April 3, 1768. These births and baptisms may be found in the Haverhill vital records. He moved to Boscawen, N. H., in 1768, and New Hampshire records show that Parker and John were also his children. These children were perhaps born after he went to New Hampshire. The above Jesse Cross had thirteen children. References given me for the above data are New England Genealogy, volume 4, page 1861, and the History of Northfield, N. H. Stephen Cross, father of the above children was the son of Thomas Cross and his wife Sarah, Boardman, daughter of Thomas and Sarah (Langley) Boardman, or Bordman. Thomas Cross was born at Chebacco, Mass., March 10, 1689, according to the Ipswich vital records, the son of George Cross. According to the History of Weare, N. H., he died Nov. 22, 1772, in his seventy-seventh year, in Bradford, Mass. This would make his birth date about 1696.

His marriage intentions were published Feb. 18, 1720-01, in Ipswich, Mass., to Sarah Boardman, born about 1693, and died in Bradford Mass., Nov. 27, 1772, in her seventieth year. Their children were all baptized in Ipswich excepting the two youngest, whose births are recorded in Bradford, Mass. They are as follows: Thomas, baptized 1721, probably died young; Stephen, baptized May 24, 1724, married first, Hannah Guild and second, Hannah Marsh; Sarah, baptized March 20, 1725, and died 1736; John, baptized Sept. 29, 1728; Esther, baptized April 9, 1732, and died soon; James, baptized Aug. 26, 1733; Ralph baptized April 7, 1736; Sarah, baptized Sept. 16, 1739; Thomas, baptized Dec. 20, 1741; Abiel, born April 8, 1744, in Bradford Mass. and Lucy, born Nov. 16, 1746, in Bradford, Mass. Thomas Cross, the father of the abov children, was the son of George Cross, who is thought to be the son of the emigrant, Robert Cross, but I believe this has not been proved.

George was born about 1660, and appears in Ipswich, or Chebacco, as Essex was then called, unheralded. The emigrant Robert Cross is thought, in "My Children's Ancestors," by Cross, to be the Robert Cross born in England, June 26, 1613. He came to America in the "Mary and John" in 1634, and was a proprietor in Ipswich in 1635, according to Pope's Pioners, and married Ann, or Hannah Jordan, the daughter of Stephen and Susanna Jordan, of Ipswich and Newbury, Mass. Robert's known children were: Elizabeth, born 1636 married William Nelson; Robert, born 1641-42, married Martha Treadwell; Martha, married Dec. 20, 1664, William Durkee; Captain Stephen, born about 1646-47, married Elizabeth Cheney; Sarah, married, 1675, William Butler; Ralph, born Feb. 15, 1658, married Mary, and it is thought Nathaniel, born later than 1658, and George and John were also his children. I think I could get more data for you, if I knew specifically what you want to know, as the old gentleman of whom I spoke got a great many town records and some private records on this line. I think he made an effort to get everything there was known.

E. H. M.

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THE SEARCH FOR HENRY CROSS

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NUMBER 3

STONE HEAD

Road marker made by Henry Cross in 1851 as it looked in the 1920's. See also Fig. 10.

THE SEARCH

FOR HENRY CROSS

An Adventure in

Biography and Americana

by W. Douglas Hartley

INDIANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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In Memory of

DOUGLAS HARTLEY

December 2, 1960 — April 14, 1962

whose courage had no
end

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I

THE SEARCH

PRESUMABLY it was in the fall of 1852 or the spring of 1853 that a man drove a wagon and team to a country churchyard in the Indiana hill country. In the bed of the wagon there was a newly carved monument made to mark the grave of one George R. Godson who had died on September 3, 1852. (See Fig. 1.) The stone slab was removed from the wagon and put in place in the churchyard, known as Harmony Burial Ground. This done, the man returned to the wagon and left.

On that simple gravestone there was inscribed only the name of the deceased, the date of his death, his age, and the words "In Memory of." The carver failed to sign the work. And so the gravestone made for George R. Godson, with an exquisite sculptured relief carved on its face, stood as an anonymous work of art. When its maker climbed in his wagon and returned home, he left behind not only an example of his finest work, but also an unsolved mystery: his identity.

Whoever that old carver was, unless by some indirect way he could be identified, he would forever remain a part of a now nameless and faceless legion of men and women identified as anonymous artists. The legacy which they left us is considerable both in size and in the quality of the work which they created but did not sign. There were left to us paintings, sculptures in wood, stone, and metal, decorations made for homes and shops, gravestone carvings, figureheads for the prows of sailing vessels, weather vanes, toys, and ornaments.

While they were made for many diverse purposes, most of them have one thing in common, the fact that their authorship cannot be established. Of the fifty examples of folk sculpture of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries catalogued in *Arts of the United States,* forty are anonymous. Of twelve works of folk sculpture selected from the Spanish Colonial period in the American Southwest, ten are anonymous.

These works which comprise a rather vast and varied assortment of minor masterpieces were in the main made as functional pieces rather than as works of art. No doubt, in many cases their creators had no idea that they were making works of art. A goodly number of these unknown men were untrained in art but had skill, originality, and an aesthetic sense to make up for the deficiency.

Cahill and Barr, in *Art in America in Modern Times,* concede that the work of these craftsmen is far more interesting than the work of the professionals. In fact, many authors writing of the American art traditions acknowledge the unique value of works of art and craft made by the folk artist.

For many years, incomparable works of this kind lay unnoticed in attics, antique shops, and junk yards. Perhaps hundreds have been lost or destroyed. Happily, however, in recent years there has come about an awakening to the peculiar value of these examples of folk art. The Carnegie Study of the Arts of the United States included many examples of folk art in its catalogue, helping to bring an end to the era of indifference. New York's Museum of Early American Folk Arts is devoted exclusively to the collection and preservation of our early-day arts. Historical societies, museums, and private collections in many parts of the country have acquired works of folk art.

In spite of this, there remain thousands of examples of folk art which are mistaken for valueless junk and are burned, destroyed, or maimed by those who are ignorant of the true value of what they possess.

Marucha T. Hartley

Fig. 1. Monument for GEORGE R. GODSON, Harmony Burial Ground, Bartholomew County, 1852

Attributed to Henry Cross. Believed to be the first work made by the "Anonymous Carver of Harmony" and the carving which triggered the search for Henry Cross

Almost in a class by themselves are those direct carvings on early tombstones which, because of their original function, must remain outside, the easy victim of vandals and the elements. Harriette M. Forbes made an extensive survey of such tombstones in New England and in 1927 published a volume about the carvers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries whose work is still standing. Her study has recently been reinforced by Ann Parker and Avon Neal who, working under a Ford Foundation grant, have made rubbings of thousands of early New England tombstones. By their work, some record, even though incomplete, has been made of this class of early folk art.

Such efforts notwithstanding, many works of folk art are cast into oblivion and are beyond retrieving. The pity is that such waste will likely continue. Thereby not only have we lost objects, but we have also lost a part of our record and a fragment of our past.

The real value of folk art was clearly stated by Carl Carmer in a talk given at the New York Museum of Early American Folk Arts.[1] He said, in part: "In the years of our national existence, folk material has ever been the welcome companion of history on which it has given complementary and clarifying comment. Inspired by our landscape, our work and our play, folk tales, folk songs, and folk art have flowed from the people as naturally as the sap flows in our maples."

Carmer also said that "many American scholars agree with the German philosopher Johann Gottfried von Herder that these products are intimations of the nature of our culture, and they proclaim that our folk arts have laid a base for the fine arts in form, spirit, and expression; that our folk forms have become the essential forms in any communal group and have tended to shape and color sophisticated or conscious art even when they were not specifically drawn upon. The students of the American fancy who agree with these conclusions

[1] Carl Carmer, "Of Wooden Indians and Iron Dogs," in *Craft Horizons*, XXII, No. 6 (November-December, 1962), pp. 8-9.

are concerned less with genius or the eventual masterpiece than with the texture of communal experience and expression, and they argue that history should portray the many layers of the cultures of people rather than the peaks of achievement."

According to Carmer, "Knowledge of a nation's folk arts is knowledge of the creative workings of the minds of its folk. It is a key to a nation's value, a highway that leads into the heart of a people."

Our paths crossed by chance, mine and that of the unknown man who had come that fall day in 1852 and erected the headstone for George R. Godson. A full century and ten years had intervened, however, and the chances of any development resulting from this crossing of paths was quite remote. The man who had made the Godson monument was one of the army of the forgotten; there was little likelihood that anyone could salvage him from that great oblivion.

I did not realize that this nearly hopeless task would fall to me when my attention was drawn to that headstone on the brow of the hill which is Harmony Burial Ground. If it had not been, then the unknown carver would have remained ignored, his talent overlooked, and his life virtually unrecorded.

Old Harmony Burial Ground is located about seven miles west of Columbus, Indiana, on a county road known as the Youth Camp Road. It occupies a half acre of grassy slope crowned with trees. On one side there is a creek and a small concrete bridge. On the other, a farm. It is delimited by an old iron fence and it has only one small out-building where the caretaker keeps his tools. From the adjacent farm one hears the mundane sound of chickens and pigs, the plaintive squeak of a windmill, and other noises appropriate to the time of year.

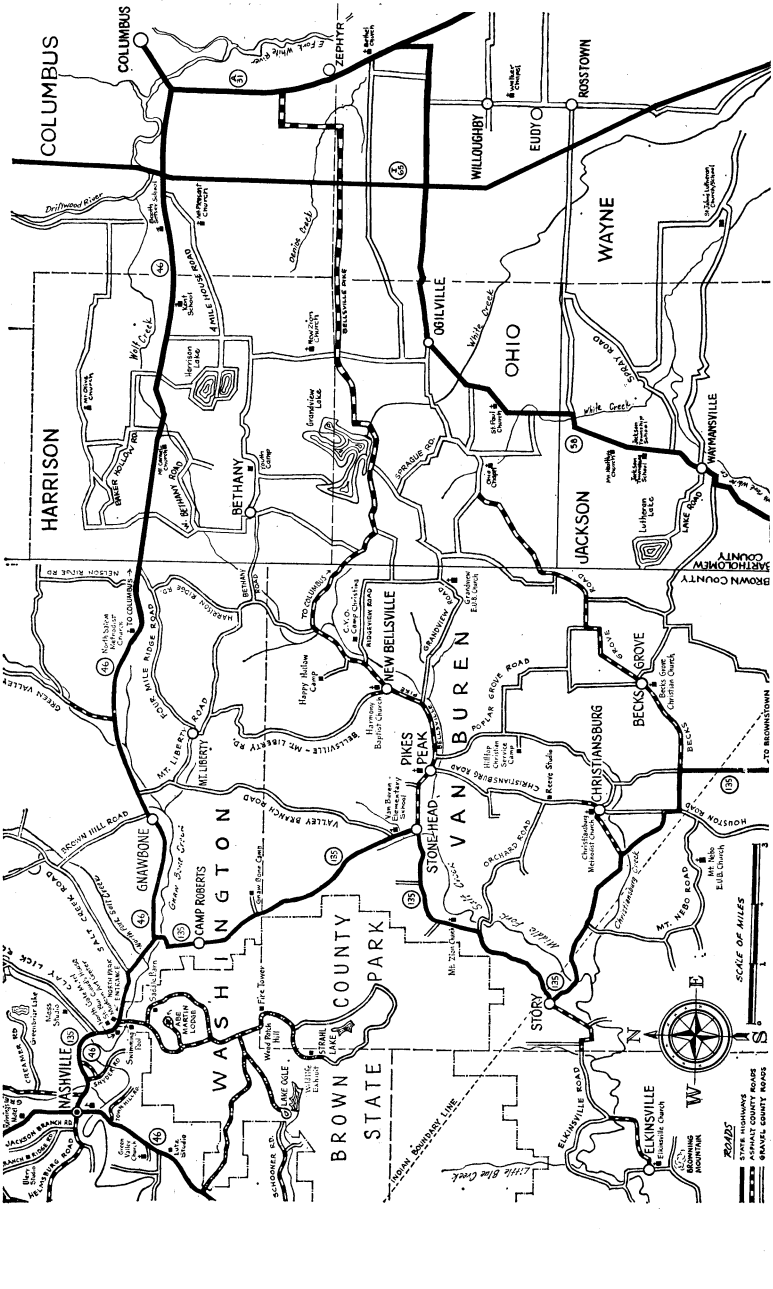
As a boy I had ridden past Harmony many times on my bicycle during summer afternoons. I had stopped there many

times to rest in the shade of the trees and to throw stones in the small brook which flows by at the foot of the hill.

On one unplanned visit to Harmony, many years later, I stopped again and went inside. My wife and I had at that time been recently bereaved of our infant son and we were both curiously drawn to the slabs and markers of any cemetery because there we felt spiritually closer to our own departed little one. On that visit Harmony looked like eternity. It was peaceful and lonely, belonging to some parenthetical pocket of the world which was a part of today but more related to yesterday. There could be no better place to pause and indulge in reverie, to relive the nostalgia of yesterday and to think of life . . . and death.

I wandered among the headstones for half an hour. I was more interested in the solitude than in studying gravestones, for most of them were remarkably lacking in originality and beauty. But one caught my attention, a slab tombstone made of some unusually dark smooth material and decorated with a carved relief of a weeping willow tree. It was unlike any other headstone there. The rest were primarily white marble: tombstones which were remarkable only for their triteness. This stone was a blue-gray and retained a sharpness of detail in both the lettering and carving which made it look newly made. But it was dated 1852. That old headstone was obviously not the product of the machine age. It had been carved by a superb craftsman whose skill as a carver and sculptor I could appreciate as a fellow sculptor. (See Fig. 1.)

A weeping willow tree is not an uncommon device to find on a tombstone. The willow tree on that headstone was not a realistic tree. It had been conceived as a design, and natural parts of the tree had been altered in a particular way to strengthen the design and the organization of the tree. Stylization is, of course, an ancient approach to the art of sculpture and was widely practiced by the early Egyptians, Mesopotamians, Greeks, and others. Stylized sculpture of this quality is expected from works of art of the ancient world. It is sur-


COLUMBUS
ZEPHYR
WILLOUGHBY
EUDY
ROSSTOWN
HARRISON
BETHANY
OBILVILLE
OHIO
WAYNE
WAYNESVILLE
JACKSON
BROWN COUNTY
ARTHUR COUNTY
NEW BELLSVILLE
PIKES PEAK
VAN BUREN
BECKS GROVE
CHRISTIANSBURG
STONE HEAD
STORY
GNAWBONE
CAMP ROBERTS
WASHINGTON
MT. LIBERTY
NASHVILLE
BROWN STATE PARK
COUNTY
ELKINSVILLE
Driftwood River
Mill Creek
White Creek
Little Blue Creek
Middle Fork
Christiansburg Creek
Deer Lick Creek
Salt Creek
Indian Boundary Line
Four Mile Ridge Road
Valley Branch Road
Mt. Liberty Road
Christiansburg Road
Orchard Road
Houston Road
Mt. Hebo Road
Sprague Rd.
Sandy Road
Lake Road
Bethany Road
Bellsville Pike
Scale of Miles
Roads
State Highways
Asphalt County Roads
Gravel County Roads

prising to find it in an out-of-the-way rural graveyard in southern Indiana. It is especially surprising when one considers that that gravestone must have been created by an early settler of Indiana.

My interest was in the object. I looked at that headstone first as a piece of fine sculpture. My first thought was: are there works equivalent to this to be found in other rural burial grounds? If so, it might be interesting to search for them and to photograph them as a documentary record. I had no way of knowing that as I sought other examples of work of that period and of that place, my interest would turn from the work to the man. In time, it would be almost as if the man himself were calling out to me.

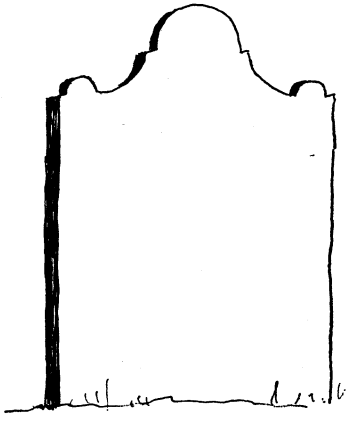
But for now my interest was centered on the work. That interest was only desultory and fleeting. So I turned and left Harmony Burial Ground with no definite idea of returning again.

Whenever there was an opportunity to go back to my old home near Columbus, I did so. When the weather permitted, I took my wife and children in search of other old cemeteries of the Bartholomew-Brown county region. But there was no plan to this series of explorations; they were casual, unhurried. We were away from the Indiana hill country for the summer but returned in early autumn.

One afternoon in September we looked about the City Cemetery in Columbus. It occupies a large area which is bounded by houses on two sides and a park on the other two. The grounds are accented by a very tall, white obelisk. Beyond the pointed shadow of that monument there is an unsingular assortment of headstones, many erected in memory of unidentified Union soldiers. About a hundred yards from the east fence there stands a wobbly row of red cedar trees of some considerable age. They are like wizened shepherds guarding their flock. Because of their forlorn and funereal

aspect, they give the impression of being mourners who have never gone home.

Near those cedars I found perhaps twenty very old tombstones dating from 1833 to 1849. In a way I found them to be baffling. All of those old sandstone markers had been cut from quite similar material. All were slabs approximately an inch in thickness. Almost all of them had the same ornate shape:



All but three bore only names, dates, and epitaphs, with no decoration whatsoever. (See Fig. 2.) Those which were different had the same shape, but were decorated with willow tree designs almost identical to the headstone for George R. Godson at Harmony Burial Ground seven miles west of town. (See Fig. 3.)

I assumed, quite incorrectly, that all of these old sandstone markers in Columbus were made by the same carver who had created the headstone for George R. Godson. There was ample evidence for that assumption. For one thing, the monuments in Columbus were made from the same kind of stone as the Godson monument. They were all made between 1830 and 1855; all were meticulously lettered. Three had the same decorative motif: a particularly shaped willow tree.

At the time I did not realize that hand-carved tombstones are highly individual. I failed to observe that epitaph and

birth-death dates were often separated by a small mark. I had not studied enough markers to note the individuality of chisel marks. I would come to realize that a tombstone hardly needed a signature: the hallmarks of its maker were clearly recognizable.

My wife photographed a selection of these old tombstones in Columbus and we returned home.

The following spring I was back again. My preoccupation with the search for the anonymous carver had languished. But when again in the old, familiar hill country he came back to my mind. The day after I returned I took my parents for a drive.

Most people in Columbus take their drives into Brown County to the west. Brown County has a reputation for its scenic hills. Those hills are covered with trees, brambles, briers, sassafras, and sandstone rocks. In the spring of the year there is redbud in bloom, giving spectacular color to the hills. In the warm months of the year the hills are blue-green with haze. In summer evenings, when the cool air slides down into the valleys, a layer of mist, like white smoke, inundates the low areas.

The region of hills in western Bartholomew County and in Brown County is beautiful but is not particularly productive. The terrain is quite rolling and much of the best topsoil has eroded. Those people who settled there seem to have had a constant struggle against an environment which was not really suited to agriculture except in some valleys. In this area, the names of places are almost as picturesque as the country itself: Bean Blossom, Gnaw Bone, Stone Head, Story, Pikes Peak, and Stony Lonesome.

I wanted to continue my search of old cemeteries to see if there were more headstones similar to those in Columbus and at Harmony. The nearest place west was at South Bethany, which is in Bartholomew County almost on the Brown County

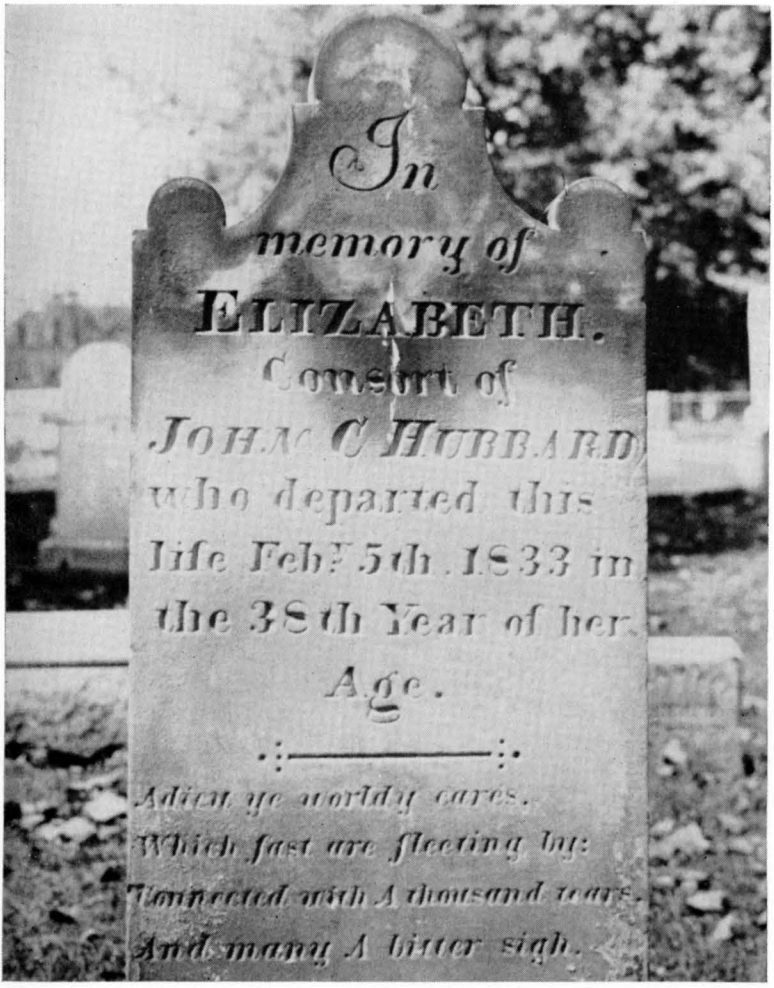


Fig. 2. Monument for ELIZABETH HUBBARD, Columbus City Cemetery, 1833

Believed made by an unknown carver who lived in Columbus between 1830 and 1850. Perhaps Henry Cross knew him and worked with him as an assistant or apprentice.

Marucha T. Hartley

Fig. 3. Monument for JOSEPH B. CARTER, Columbus City Cemetery, 1849

Similar in shape to the tombstones carved by the anonymous carver of Columbus but similar in design to those attributed to Henry Cross, this stone is thought to have been the result of master and apprentice working together.

border. But we first stopped again at Harmony, which was on the way. This time we made a rather thorough survey of the grounds and discovered, half buried, another old sandstone marker. It was dated 1855 and consisted of a curious pair of trees tied together about midway up the trunk with a square knot. Ensconced within a complex of carved leaves, there were two rose blossoms. Delicate, incised lines in the background seemed to indicate falling rain. The bank from which the trees grew was decorated to suggest grasses. Both the Godson headstone and this one, for J. Marshall Helm, were similar in size, shape, and quality. (See Fig. 4.)

We drove on to the village of South Bethany or Bethany located west of Taylor Hill and the Youth Camp. It is on a rolling plateau which offers views of the distant hills which are nearly spectacular.

I had been to South Bethany a few times as a boy. It was the kind of place which would not change much because the forces of change were not there. South Bethany occupies a small bit of lumpy ground and consists primarily of a white frame church, a schoolhouse, a general store, and a few houses. I parked beside the church and went into the cemetery. It was fenced and well cared for. There could not have been more than a hundred grave markers in it. Few people had lived in that part of the country.

Even from a distance it was easy to see that there were several old sandstone markers here. The most interesting was one made for Isaac Winland who died in 1863. (See Fig. 5.) It was very similar to the stone we had seen at Harmony for J. Marshall Helm, bearing the two trees knotted together at the center. The two stones are by no means identical and illustrate the carver's habit of never duplicating his work. This headstone for Isaac Winland, however, was badly marred from weathering.

Not far away we found a simple, exquisite headstone, fallen over, for Joseph L. Stout who died in 1859. (See Fig. 6.) It was decorated with a carving of a single rose within a circular

Marucha T. Hartley

Fig. 4. Monument for J. MARSHALL HELM, Harmony Burial Ground Bartholomew County, 1855

Attributed to Henry Cross

Marucha T. Hartley

Fig. 5. Monument for ISAAC WINLAND, The Churchyard, South Bethany, Bartholomew County, 1863

Attributed to Henry Cross

field. The background of that relief carving consisted of tiny dots, executed with a pointed chisel, and arranged in perfect concentric circles. The line of lettering which indicated the date of death was marred and had a long blank space between the date of the month and the year, as though the carver had made a serious error in his calculations. This stone had fallen over on the ground and broken in two, but it still retained its remarkably delicate texture.

One other monument caught my attention. It was a monument consisting of four individual stones, the uppermost being a tall pyramid. It was dated 1852.

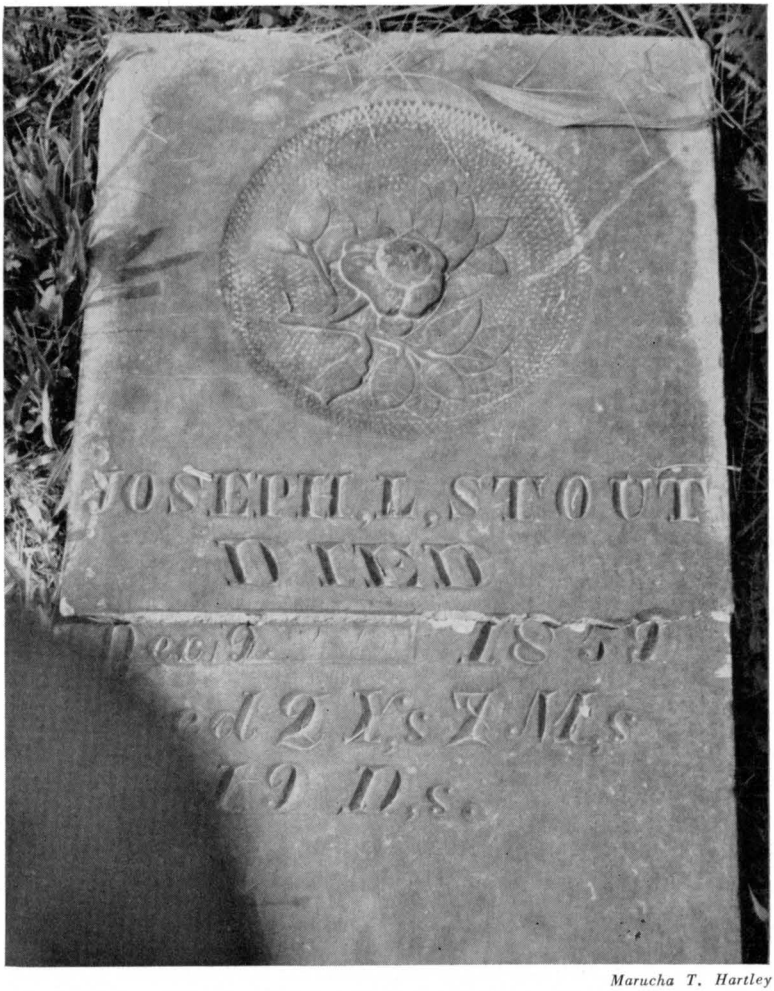
The hand which had carved these impressively delicate and tender images belonged to a man who had great skill and considerable talent. If he had work in other churchyards in the hill country, I wanted to see it.

Old cemeteries hold a strong appeal to many people. Charles Wallis wrote, "On old tombstones, we can find stories of ancient loves and shattered dreams, bitter commentaries on life, speculations and affirmations of immortality, and noble tributes to the accomplishment of man. On these stone silhouettes of bygone days we may read the hopes and despairs, the joys and frustrations of Everyman."[2]

As we studied the old tombstones, we became interested in them in the dimension suggested by Wallis. For every beautiful sculptured carving there was a monument. Each monument represented one human being. Each mortal man had his mourners and his survivors. Each had known and been known. We began to notice those who had died at a particularly young age, those young women who had died in childbirth, and those who had died evidently of plagues, when many from the same families were lost in a matter of days.

Our study became gradually less documentary and more humanistic. I began to wonder more about the man who had

[2] Charles L. Wallis, *Stories on Stone* (New York, 1954), p. xi.



Marucha T. Hartley

Fig. 6. Monument for JOSEPH L. STOUT, The Churchyard, South Bethany, Bartholomew County, 1859

Attributed to Henry Cross. This is one of two stones attributed to Mr. Cross having roses within a circular depression.

made these many markers. Perhaps he had been like the old-time carvers of gravestones of early New England. Men such as the Lamsons of Charlestown, Nathaniel Emmes, William Codner, Henry Geyer, and others had made tombstone carving an individual and vigorous art. They originated their own designs. Of them, Harriette Forbes said, "They not only never seemed to copy another man's work; they never copied their own."[3]

But this breed of early-day sculptor had supposedly died out. Parker and Neal said, "The art of gravestone carving in America flourished from around 1650 to shortly after the turn of the nineteenth century. Then, as the old-time stonecutters died off, designs became standardized, and mechanical means were employed in their cutting. It was the beginning of the end; after 1800 the creative forces which had perpetuated gravestone carving slipped into rapid decline."[4]

The nameless tombstone carver of Harmony Burial Ground and South Bethany appeared to be working in the tradition of earlier America. That earlier tradition was described by Parker and Neal: "As we have mentioned, few of the men who cut gravestones were trained as artists; this full-time, specialized occupation (sometimes passed along from father to son) seems to have come later, when leisure time and population (i.e. demand) permitted. It is more common to find a man working locally over a radius of perhaps twenty miles, using native stone, cutting epitaphs for friends and neighbors throughout his working life. Since these men were not considered artists, slight significance was attached to their work; there is very little record of them to be found in historical archives."[5]

Perhaps this was a description of the carver whose work

[3] Harriette M. Forbes, *Gravestones of Early New England and the Men Who Made Them* (Boston, 1927), p. 19.

[4] Ann Parker and Avon Neal, "New England Gravestone Rubbings," in *Craft Horizons*, XXIII, No. 4 (July-August, 1963), p. 44.

[5] *Ibid.*

I had admired. Perhaps I should never be able to discover his identity at all.

In order to simplify my clue-gathering, I decided to make a simple map which would show visually what had been found. My thinking from the beginning had been that the unknown carver had lived in Columbus, Nashville, or perhaps some place in between the two. The places I had visited (as well as the places I planned to visit) were shown on my map. For each probable item of work by the anonymous carver, I placed a colored tack in the map. My theory was that greater concentrations of his work would be found closer to his home. Once I had begun my map and inserted pins in the appropriate places, I found that there were two pins in Columbus, two at Harmony Burial Ground, and three at South Bethany. If my hypothesis was correct, then I should look westward beyond South Bethany where I had found three examples.

The road westward out of South Bethany forks just across the Brown-Bartholomew county line; one branch leads to Mt. Liberty while the other goes to New Bellsville. I chose to follow the latter.

On that trip my wife was with me. We followed the road out of South Bethany. It jogged around barns and pastures, forded a creek twice, and wound down a vast hill which was heavily forested. Ultimately we came into an open valley and turned right at the small iron bridge. Before long the vaguely familiar village appeared ahead.

New Bellsville is quite small and neat. There are many villages and hamlets like it in the hill country. New Bellsville has a big white frame church (established in 1850), a general store with gasoline pump in front, an unoccupied lodge hall, and several modest houses.

The store has a coal stove in back and smells of kerosine and feed. In the hill village, the general store is the center of town, the sole business and the heart of the community. There

you can buy* a fishing license, hunting license, a variety of staple goods, some oddments of hardware and clothing, and get information.

On this Saturday morning there was no sound in the village. The church, of course, was closed. The store seemed to be unattended. We went inside but nobody was there. We called out and waited but nobody answered. We went out onto the wooden porch and looked up and down the road. At one end of the settlement there was the lodge hall and at the other end a small oblong building which stood tentatively on a make-shift foundation of building blocks. We walked toward it, going close enough to read the name lettered on the door: Dr. Pearcy. But the doctor was obviously no longer practicing medicine.

Opposite his office was the old cemetery. It occupies an expanse of hillside and covers the slope down to the roadway. A great stone retaining wall separates it from the roadway. The wall is penetrated at the center by an entrance and some stone steps (hand-chiseled).

We decided to look briefly through the cemetery to see whether our unknown tombstone cutter had been there. Most of the markers were white marble slabs, obelisks, and pedestals. But near the foot of the hill there were perhaps ten or twelve dark sandstone tablets. Even from a distance we could see that they looked like the work of the carver of Harmony.

We saw some designs which were vaguely familiar and others which were new to us. There were strange motifs of leaves, of geometric shapes, of sheep, of trees and roses, and one stone had a carving of an unusual urn, some drapes, and a row of interlaced, undulating ribbon.

This was a delight! It was a mother lode of work to examine in detail. It was more proof that the carver had an apparently vast source of ideas for designs. His capacity at invention was clearly established and his virtuosity began to be evident.

* The store has since gone out of business.

Best of all, we seemed to be getting closer. Without taking time to study any of the stones in detail, we walked back into the village. There were questions we wanted to ask.

This time there was a mongrel dog resting in the shade of the porch in front of the store. We went inside the store again. Again we saw no one. We looked around and called but heard no answer. But just as we were leaving, a young girl about fifteen years of age came up.

"Are your mother and father here?" we asked.

"No. They're in the field."

"We wanted some information about the village," I said.

"I don't know anything," she answered. "Mrs. Campbell lives across the road. She knows a lot."

An elderly lady had taken a chair on the porch of the house opposite the store. She watched as we approached.

"The girl at the store said you could tell us about New Bellsville," I said.

She stood up as we mounted the steps and came forward a step or two. I explained that we wanted historical information.

"What kind of information do you want?"

"We were looking at some of the old gravestones on the hill. We wondered if you could tell us anything about them," I answered.

"Some of them are very old," she said.

I was about to ask if we could sit down when the lady said, "Won't you sit down. The swing is comfortable, if you don't mind swings,"

We thanked her and sat down.

"I should have introduced myself," she said. "I'm Mrs. Grace Campbell. Folks usually call me Miss Pearcy, though."

"Oh," my wife said, "You must be the daughter of Dr. Pearcy. We saw his office down the road."

"Yes, he was my father."

Mrs. Campbell (or Miss Pearcy) was about seventy-five years old, as I recall. She was erect, carried a cane, wore

slightly tinted glasses, and had on a little sweater in spite of the fact that it was quite a warm day.

"When we were in the cemetery, we noticed that there were quite a number of burials in the early part of the 1850's," my wife said.

"In those times, when New Bellsville was just a new town, there were epidemics. I remember hearing people talk about them when I was just a small girl," she said.

"We noticed four people from one family who were buried within a month or two. I think it was the Seal family. In 1853 or 1854," I said.

"Yes, there was sickness then, and a lot of it. It is almost more than we can imagine how some families had their deaths so close together. The terrible thing was that it was so often the little children who were taken."

"Sometimes an entire family?" I asked.

"Oh yes, sometimes everybody . . . mother, father and children."

"I thought that Brown County had the reputation of being a healthful place to live because it was so hilly," I said.

"Yes, that's true. Columbus was all swampy in the early days and that meant mosquitoes and fever and a lot of sickness. We've never had swamps here. The old folks always hated the green scum on still water. Still and all, there was too much sickness," she said.

"It must have been a hard life . . . being a doctor . . . in those early days," I said.

"Well, yes. People were spread out. Most everyone lived on a farm and the only way to get there was on a horse. I think I have a picture of Dr. Pearcy in a scrapbook. Let's go inside and I'll try to find it," she said.

The house was neat and silent. The parlor furniture was large and ornate.

"That sofa was brought from England by my mother," Mrs. Campbell said. "And also this tea chest." My wife and I took the tea chest and studied the intricate carving on it

while our hostess went to find the picture. While she was out of the room, I noticed a strange object on the floor. I picked it up. It was an old leather belt several feet in length which had pockets on both ends. I raised the flaps. Under each there was a small glass bottle with pills or powder inside.

About then Mrs. Campbell returned.

"A saddlebag?" I asked.

"That's just what it is. I'll bet you've never seen one before," she said, smiling.

My wife and I both nodded.

"It was used by the doctor to carry pills and powders for his patients. He threw it over the horse in front of the saddle. Here is a picture of him and his horse."

She handed us a brownish photograph of a handsome man dressed in black who was standing beside his horse. "I thought," my wife said, "that the country doctor went in a buggy when he made house calls."

"Some might have," Mrs. Campbell said, "but my father rode on his horse very often because a buggy would have mired down or broken a wheel. Back in those times the roads were pretty poor and a vehicle would have been of no use at all."

We spent some time looking at other photographs which Mrs. Campbell had. At length I brought up the subject of the old tombstone carver.

"We have been trying to get some information about a man who worked in these parts as a maker of gravestones," I said.

"Oh, yes," she said. "It seems to me that at one time there was a stone carver who lived in Van Buren Township."

"Before the Civil War?" my wife asked.

"Very likely."

"You said that he lived in Van Buren Township. Is this part of it?" I asked.

"Yes. Van Buren Township goes a little beyond Storyville," she said.

"Is that the same place as Story which is on the map?" I asked.

"Yes. Folks used to call it Storyville. They've shortened it. Nowadays they do that so much, you know."

"Well, would you know the name of that tombstone carver or exactly where he lived?" I asked.

"No, I wouldn't. I can't tell you much except that there was such a man and he lived here in Brown County. And I imagine that he was the one who made the oldest markers in the cemetery," Mrs. Campbell replied.

"Well, I suppose that we should go on to the next town and see what we can find out there," my wife said.

"I'm sure that somebody will know something about him. But it may take you a while to find him. And if you are looking for old gravestones, you'll find many in Mt. Zion churchyard."

"Where is that?" I asked.

"It's on this road. If you continue on west, you'll pass Pikes Peak and Stone Head. Mt. Zion church is beyond Stone Head on the left side of the road. It isn't far," she said.

"I've seen Stone Head. When I was a boy, I used to ride my bike out this way. Once I went as far as Stone Head," I remarked.

"If you are interested in old carvings, you should like Stone Head. It is quite old, you know."

"Yes. We'll look for it," I said.

When we left Mrs. Campbell, my wife and I returned to look more closely at some of the sculptures in the cemetery. While there were many to study, three were, to me, quite remarkable.

One was a slab which was in memory of someone whose name was almost obliterated by a peculiar white deposit on the stone. The surname Wilson was faintly legible and the date, July 16, 1854, could easily be read. (See Fig. 7.)

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Fig. 7. Monument for ——— WILSON, The Churchyard, New Bellsville, Brown County, 1854

Attributed to Henry Cross

The upper portion of that hoary stone was decorated with a fanciful and rhythmic design which was made up of four flowers that resembled the white daisies which grow wild in that part of the country. Beneath it was a group of leaves, below that was a horizontal row of geometrical shapes. On either side of the inscription there were columns.

Of course, many tombstone designs consist of quite literal things. For example, a Bible. Often, objects are carved on a monument which are symbolic. Sheep, for instance, normally refer to the Lamb of God or Jesus Christ, the sacrificial lamb. Flowers, following a tradition of many centuries, often refer to personal characteristics such as purity, generosity, and so forth.

In the case of this stone, we found ourselves confronted with an unusual assortment of pictographs which must have been symbolic in intent. One possible interpretation is that (on this stone) the upper layer or stratum of the design stood for birth (note the rising sun), the central stratum stood for the fruition of life (note the vine), and the bottom stratum stood for death (note the simplified hour-glass shapes and the old-time coffin at the center, both death symbols from early New England).

Not far from this stone we saw a monument to Joseph Harris Campbell which was similar to the one just described but which had a quite different arrangement of the geometric and natural shapes.

And nearby there was a tombstone for Mary Elizabeth Moore, dated in 1856, which consisted of partially opened drapes with silken cords and tassels and a curious object which was reminiscent of a glass perfume jar. (See Fig. 8.) Across the top there was an undulating ribbon or band which resembled a long strand or length of cord looped over a row of large buttons. This, like the Wilson stone, had been blotched.

I had seen tombstones with heavy drapes as a motif. But ordinarily these showed a catafalque between the drapes. This design reminded my wife and me much more of a window

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Fig. 8. Monument for MARY ELIZABETH MOORE, The Churchyard, New Bellsville, Brown County, 1856

Attributed to Henry Cross

with light-weight curtains, a blind, and a vase with one flower on the sill.

We would probably never know, but it was almost like trying to solve an Egyptian hieroglyphic when one lacks the key.

Still another stone which we particularly enjoyed was that made for the infant son of "Dr, S, C, & M, A, Wilson" (note the use of commas instead of periods in the title and initials). This stone, like many others at New Bellsville, is the victim of a white substance which clings to the surface of the stone. Its subject was roses. Two flowers were in full bloom and one unopened bud had fallen off. In the fashion of old-time tombstones, the fallen rosebud often stood for a dead child. The two flowers stood for the bereaved parents. (See Fig. 9.)

Thus we see the rather direct way in which things were shown in a pictorial language which is both charming and melancholy.

Two headstones at New Bellsville were of great interest. One, carved for Nancy Crouch in 1865, still bore the pencil lines made by the sculptor when he sketched the design. The design carved in relief depicted an open Bible. The lines used to define it were clearly visible. When we turned the stone over (it was lying on the ground), we could see where he had begun the drawing first on the opposite side and had changed his mind about which facing to use!

When we came to a stone which was a thick rectangle standing on end with a rooflike stone surmounting it, we were both amazed and delighted. Although the name of the deceased was illegible, two things could be read: the date, 1865, and the name of the carver: C. Cross!

"So, this is the name of our unknown carver! C. Cross. I didn't think we would ever find out," I said to my wife.

"Yes. Isn't it marvelous?" she answered.

It might have been mervelous except that C. Cross was not the name of the carver whose work we had admired and studied. In our eagerness to identify the anonymous sculptor

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Fig. 9. Monument for the INFANT WILSON, The Churchyard, New Bellsville, Brown County, 1858

Attributed to Henry Cross

we had accepted the first name we found. This was our second incorrect assumption. The first had been that all of the old sandstone headstones in Columbus had been done by the same man.

After our half day spent in New Bellsville we were unable to return to Brown County and the trail of the unknown carver for almost three months. When we did get back, it was late in the summer. The weeds had grown high along the edge of the roads and were covered with tan dust. Every field was dappled with clusters of wild daisies and Queen Anne's lace. The foliage was dense, making the woods and forest seem impenetrable and the hills higher and more formidable.

We followed the trail of the carver as before, past Harmony Burial Ground, South Bethany, New Bellsville, and on to Pikes Peak. That village had a few scattered houses, a frame school building, and a small country store which bore the name Clark's Grocery. Above the doorway of the store was a scene showing a snow-covered mountain range.

Because there was no churchyard in Pikes Peak, we continued on until we reached the hamlet of Stone Head.

It, too, is a sleepy village and the remains of a community which was once quite important in these parts of the county. It is named for a road marker (or milestone) which stands at the junction of Road 135 and the Bellsville Pike. At that intersection there is a rigid five-foot shaft of stone surmounted by a sculptured head. It can be seen from a distance of a quarter of a mile, standing in the "T" of the roadway, in a kind of mute, naïve dignity. Stone Head is a relic from another century, an awkward antique which has miraculously escaped seizure by collectors or destruction by ice, snow, or inebriates.

That ancient milestone has the formidable calm and detachment of the Sphinx and the picturesque gracelessness of a wooden pump. In recent years, unfortunately, the entire

marker has been painted white and the hair, eyes, and jaw-whiskers of the man's head have been painted black. The lettering on the base of the stone shaft is now also black. (See Frontispiece and Fig. 10.)

The Old Stone Head points the way, by crudely drawn hands, to Columbus, Fairfax, Indianapolis, and Sparkesferie. It bears the date of 1851 and the name H. Cross. Both Columbus and Indianapolis may still be found on maps (of course) in the directions indicated on this milestone. But Fairfax and Sparkesferie are not to be found.

I was unaware, then, that the Stone Head was one of two key monuments which were central to my study. Because it was not a tombstone, I gave it only the slightest notice. However, it was impossible not to notice that the name Cross appeared on it just as it appeared on one of the headstones at New Bellsville.

My wife was curious. "Do you suppose that C. Cross and H. Cross were related?" she asked.

"Possibly," I answered. "But C. Cross is the man we're interested in. He was the gravestone carver. H. Cross might have been a cousin, or maybe was unrelated. We'll probably never know."

Perhaps half a mile beyond the village of Stone Head is Mt. Zion church. It is a simple frame building surrounded by trees and located about half way down a hill at whose feet there is a broad valley. The burial ground associated with the church is partly in front of the church and partly on one side of it. It occupies land which slopes rather markedly and is bounded by woods to the east.

Within the fence we found a great many gravestones. Perhaps twenty seemed to have been made by the anonymous carver. Again the excitement of discovery was ours. But it shortly gave way to doubt and confusion. The oldest gravestones were carved from the slabs of now well-known sand-

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Fig. 10. STONE HEAD, Route 135, Stone Head, Brown County, 1851, as it appears today

stone in the familiar rectangular shape. However, the designs on these stones were not like those which we had found in other places.

Many of these sandstone markers had only names, dates, and simple epitaphs. One rather large stone, however, had a small biography:

In Memory of

EPHRAIM HURLEY

Died Jan 18th 1854
Aged 33 Years 2 Mo.
& 18 Days

Born in North Carolina.
At the age of 10 years
moved to the State of
Indiana. Enlisted in
the Mexican War in the
4 Regiment at the age
of 26 in 1847. He lived
after he returned home
7 years & 23 days.

It brought to mind the statement by Wallis, "In one way or another nearly every event of significance in a nation's history is described on the grave slabs of those who bore the burden of the day or suffered the consequences."[6]

I was copying the little sketch about Ephraim Hurley when my wife called excitedly, "Here's another stone with the name C. Cross signed on it." She was several yards away, farther down the slope. I hurried to see what she had found. Indeed, on a stone to Catharine Price, dated 1858, there was the carver's signature. (See Fig. 11.)

"It's the same signature that we saw at New Bellsville," I said. But, on examining the carving, a willow tree in this

[6] Wallis, *Stories on Stone*, p. xiv.

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Fig. 11. Monument for CATHARINE PRICE, Mt. Zion Churchyard, Brown County, 1858

Signed C. Cross. The willow tree was evidently copied from a similar subject on the Anna Clark gravestone (Fig. 13), and the relative crudity of the subject work, especially the lettering, makes it an interesting example of the work of an apprentice carver.

case, I was rather crestfallen. The naïve image on this stone could hardly have been made by the same man who had made the magnificent, cascading willow at Harmony Burial Ground. Nearby, another stone stood. It, too, was decorated with a carved willow and bore the name Evrith Price. In both cases the lettering was hesitant, irregular, and faltering. It was inconceivable that the same man had made them all.

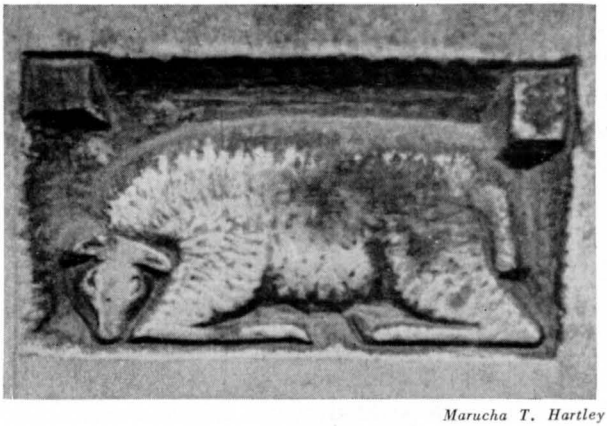

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Fig. 12. Detail from monument for SUSANNAH PRICE, Mt. Zion Churchyard, Brown County, 1857.

Attributed to Henry Cross. This lamb has a charm which comes from the rather naïve manner in which it is represented. All of the lambs on stones attributed to Mr. Cross differed from one another but each is characterized by an archaic look.

Not far off we found several headstones with carved lambs as decorations. Reclining sheep were used very commonly as the subject of sculptural relief carvings on nineteenth-century tombstones. (See Fig. 12.) One at Mt. Zion for Margareth Kreitser, dated 1859, was exquisite in every respect. Another, for George B. M. C. Petro, was well made but bore lettering which was uneven in quality.

We studied these gravestones for a while and neither of us said anything. After a few minutes, my wife said, "The stone looks like his. It's the right decade and the right county. Who could have been the carver?"

"Maybe there were two carvers out here before the Civil War," I suggested.

"I doubt it," my wife replied.

"Maybe one was an assistant or an apprentice," I said.

"It could be," she said. "But we don't know for certain."

We looked through the cemetery. There were many other gravestones. Some were without sculptural decoration. Many depicted lambs or willow trees. The most baffling aspect of this group of stones was that they were peculiar combinations of masterful carving and lettering and inept carving and lettering. The signed monument which bore the signature of C. Cross was inept.

"The only conclusion I can support," I said, "is that C. Cross was an amateur. He could not be the same man who carved the headstones at Harmony or South Bethany."

"Then who was the other man?" my wife asked.

"The other man was his teacher, perhaps," I answered. "But we don't know his name. We know that C. Cross carved and signed tombstones and that is all that we know about him."

"That isn't much to find out in a year, is it?" she asked.

In late March of the following year I returned alone to Indiana and had one day to give to picking up the trail we had left the preceding fall. When I dug out my map with the pins in it, I found the greatest concentration of work by the carver in the area between New Bellsville and Mt. Zion.

It seemed necessary to make a survey of settlements farther west and so I went there without delay, taking my map and notes. The nearest place to Mt. Zion was Story which turned out to be a hamlet of one house, a barn, and a huge general store.

I asked an old woman who was walking down the road if the store was open for business (it appeared to be deserted). She said that the woman who looked after it was out back, hoeing, but that she would open it for me if I wanted some-

thing. I did not want to disturb the storekeeper and told the old lady in the road that I would come back later.

A stream flowed on one side of the old store and there was the village pump on the other side. The barn behind the store was approached by a wide, curving driveway and was once located, apparently, to accommodate a blacksmith shop. The store itself had a high porch across its entire facade and steps leading up to the front door. Its great windows were something from a heyday long ago. The interior seemed to be largely unoccupied. Through the windows I could see shelves around the walls which, although they had odds and ends of merchandise on them, were far from crowded. I saw some old-fashioned candy cases and a large coal stove in the back. Facing the stove there was a seat from a buggy or wagon. I had never before seen such a genuinely picturesque place. Story was quaint but no one there knew it.

I asked the woman in the road (she was holding a small box of onions) if Story had not been much larger at one time.

"I guess it was," she said emphatically. "We had a post office and an awful lot of trade at the store. But things have gone down something awful. Not hardly anybody lives here anymore. And the store don't stock anything like what it used to."

It became evident to me that there had been a widespread decline among the several villages of that part of the county. Most of them had sprung up in the decade before the Civil War, had enjoyed a period of growth and vigor, but had withered until they were nearly empty shells.

Seeing the large, hollow shell of the general store at Story, I was reminded of a conversation I had had with Mrs. B. F. Hamilton of Columbus. She is a widow of seventy-some years. Mrs. Hamilton told me that she had grown up in New Bellsville and had clear recollections of going by covered wagon to the village of Stone Head. At that time, in the nineties, there was a large, general store at Stone Head which sold not only groceries, but clothing, hardware, feed, seed, and furniture.

In fact, Mrs. Hamilton described the establishment as a department store. She also recalled that there had been a gristmill there. Stone Head, and Story, too, would have been rather robust villages long ago. By comparison with their present condition, it would be fair now to call them ghost towns.

I did not linger very long in Story. From there I went west to Elkinsville, across the township line. The road wandered through the valley floor, going deeper and deeper into a place where nature was the victor and man the vanquished. If raw nature is desolate, then this was desolate. If raw nature is beauty, then this was a place of immense beauty.

Elkinsville has succumbed to those forces which take the life out of country and hill villages. There was an empty store and some places where houses had once stood. The road into Elkinsville made a great semicircle, crossed an iron bridge, and jogged past the remnants of what was once a church. Just south is Browning Mountain.

I stopped at a house and asked how to find the Elkinsville cemetery. A lady who was feeding pigs or cows told me clearly how to get there. The cemetery was reached by following a quite precipitous clay and gravel road which wound up the far hill and ended, evidently, at the burial ground. The view of the hill was swallowed up by intervening timber.

Many more than half of the gravestones on that remote hilltop cemetery were simply small field stones which had been marked crudely with names, initials, and dates. Two monuments by the anonymous carver were there. One had been broken off near the ground line and had been placed upside down in the hole in the ground which had been made when the stone was first put in place. The design on the stone was reminiscent of one which we had seen in New Bellsville but was sufficiently different to give it individuality. The carving was crisp, and the aesthetic quality of the work was evident even when it was viewed upside down.

I remained only a few minutes on that hilltop and then turned again toward Story. I could imagine nothing beyond Elkinsville. As far as I could see up the valley of Little Blue Creek there was grandeur and nostalgia: nature and remnants of man's struggle with her.

When I came to Story I stopped and found the storekeeper inside. I bought a bottle of soda pop and a sack of antique shoe laces (which were not offered as antiques). There were two women inside, one was the proprietor and the other was a very old lady who sat on the buggy seat by the stove. We talked for a short time about Story and about the large reservoir which will drown it in a year or so. When I asked about local cemeteries they told me that there was an old one between there and Christiansburg. I asked if they had ever heard of a pioneer stone carver named C. Cross, but they had not.

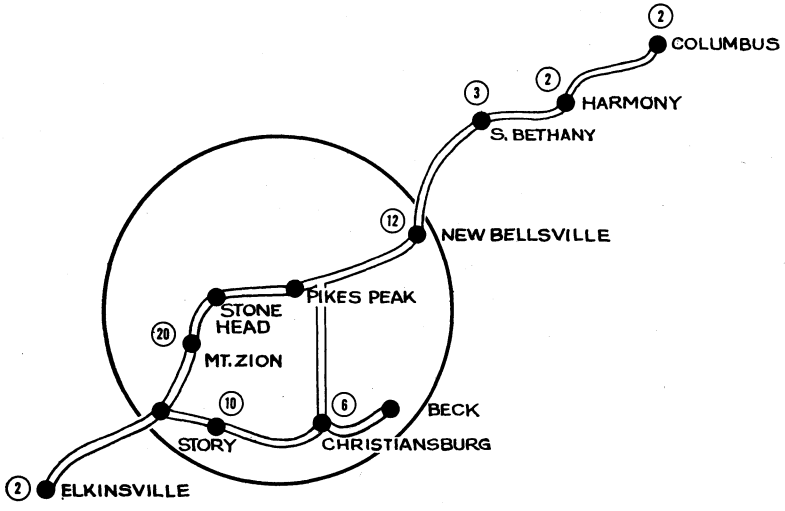
I found the cemetery, known as the Brown Cemetery, about a mile east of Story. It was perched about a third of the way up a hill and was surrounded by timber. Mud and a deep ditch made it impracticable for me to explore within its gate, but I was able to distinguish two very old tombstones which had the unmistakable hallmarks of our unknown carver's hand.

With regrets, I continued on without a careful inspection of the stones in Brown Cemetery, following the road as it paralleled the creek through the valley. My impression now is that there were large numbers of huge sycamore trees and a certain rawness of the land. Before long I jogged to the left and came to what was presumably Christiansburg. It, too, appears to be a beautiful and lonesome ghost. The school was closed and the houses had disappeared. Christiansburg church stands clean and proud (and newly painted) next to an old ramshackle shed which must have been associated with a barn at one time. Beside the shed there was a beautifully preserved car. I judged it to be at least twenty years old.

I parked in front of the church, but found nobody around. The only sound was that which came from a gurgling creek nearby. Just above the church is the old cemetery, lying in a jog of the road, next to an aged orchard. The view down into the valley from the cemetery is broad, majestic, and uncluttered.

Of the several monuments in the Christiansburg cemetery, one had a unique carving and the others were primarily names and dates. The sculptured marker was for William Roush and was dated in 1853. Its design was a strange one which consisted of a carved willow tree, another deciduous tree, and a vase of dead flowers. The quality of the sculpture was good. It came, no doubt, from the chisel of the carver from Harmony.

At Christiansburg I made a crude map on the back of an envelope to help me make a decision whether to continue my search to the north or the east. Beck lies to the east and the road going north would have ended near Pikes Peak. My hasty map-diagram showed this:



By drawing a circle large enough to touch the points of the largest concentration of the work which I felt was from the carver, I saw that the center was north of me, near Pikes Peak.

Beck, like Elkinsville, tended to be on the perimeter. While my theory was still untested and perhaps fanciful, I had enough confidence in it to use it as a basis for my quest.

Therefore, I followed the road north out of Christiansburg toward Pikes Peak. Distances are sometimes difficult to guess in these hill parts, but I think that it was about two miles to the next cemetery. That one was simply on a knoll by itself. There was no church nearby and no town. I found later that it was called Melott Cemetery. It was a grassy slope bordered by a clay road and forest. It had no gate and only a rutted place where a car could be parked, or a horse hitched. There were not a great many markers in that cemetery, and most of them were clustered at the topmost part of the hill.

It was obvious that this place was a large treasury of the work by the old carver. From the base of the hill I could easily identify the rigid brown slabs. My excitement grew greater as I approached closer and saw that here was probably the richest assortment of major works by this man which had yet been found. There were new subjects and old ones which had been done again, but differently.

One of the most astonishing was the monument to Anna Clark which had fallen and lay in the grass. The design on it was a large tree whose foliage had been depicted as ten or twelve slashing, leaping cascades. It was oddly modern in its simplicity and in the almost cubistic treatment of forms. (See Fig. 13.)

I saw and examined the marker erected for Margret Homes in 1854 which bore a design quite similar to a design on the monument for Mary Elizabeth Moore at New Bellsville which, I thought, resembled a window. (See Fig. 14.) This stone had only seven circles across the top, whereas the Moore one had eight. The curious object at the bottom almost defies classification. However, the tiny leaves formed around it are characteristic of the carver's inventions using a leaf motif.

One of the most naïve and pathetic of subjects was that on the tombstone in memory of Angaline Clark who died in

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Fig. 13. Monument for ANNA CLARK, Melott Cemetery, Pikes Peak, 1855

Attributed to Henry Cross. Henry Cross married Mary Clark, and it is thought that this tombstone was made for a person closely related to her.

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Fig. 14. Monument for MARGRET HOMES, Melott Cemetery, Pikes Peak, 1854
Attributed to Henry Cross

August of 1854 at the age of three. (See Fig. 15.) Above her name there is a representation in bas-relief of a young girl clad in old-fashioned dress with pantaloons. In front of her there is a kneeling sheep or lamb and behind her a cluster of flowers. The scene is shown in a semicircle and above this arc there are two oak leaves.

Deciphering this tombstone decoration was more than I was able to do. The lamb is an old religious symbol for the Christian, the flowers for virtue, and the oak leaf for strength. But I suspected that in this case the lamb was not symbolic in the religious sense but perhaps was a reference to the little girl's pet lamb. One can never know. But the possibility gives an added flavor of pathos.

A Bible was shown on the monument of Hannah Clark who died only six months after Anna Clark. (See Fig. 16.) The Bible on her tombstone is an ordinary subject rendered in an unusually sensitive way (observe how the carver indicated that the book had a *soft* leather cover). The Bible is shown inside what strongly resembles a proscenium of a theatrical stage. That proscenium, however, is fashioned out of a most improbable collection of things: two pillars (one broken), an arch woven of leaves, and one arrow.

It is the manner in which these unrelated objects are assembled which is arresting. The leaves seem to have been improvised as they were being carved, without any previous planning. The arrow, long a symbol of death, is located amidst the leaves but is not centered, as one would expect.

It is almost necessary to have a magnifying glass to fully realize the incredible extent of the inventiveness of this old carving. While it is superficially concerned with a very tired stereotype, the detail around the central object was done with frenzied abandon and an unmeasurable amount of creativity.

I did not come prepared for what I was to find in that cemetery in the category of clues in my search. First, the large

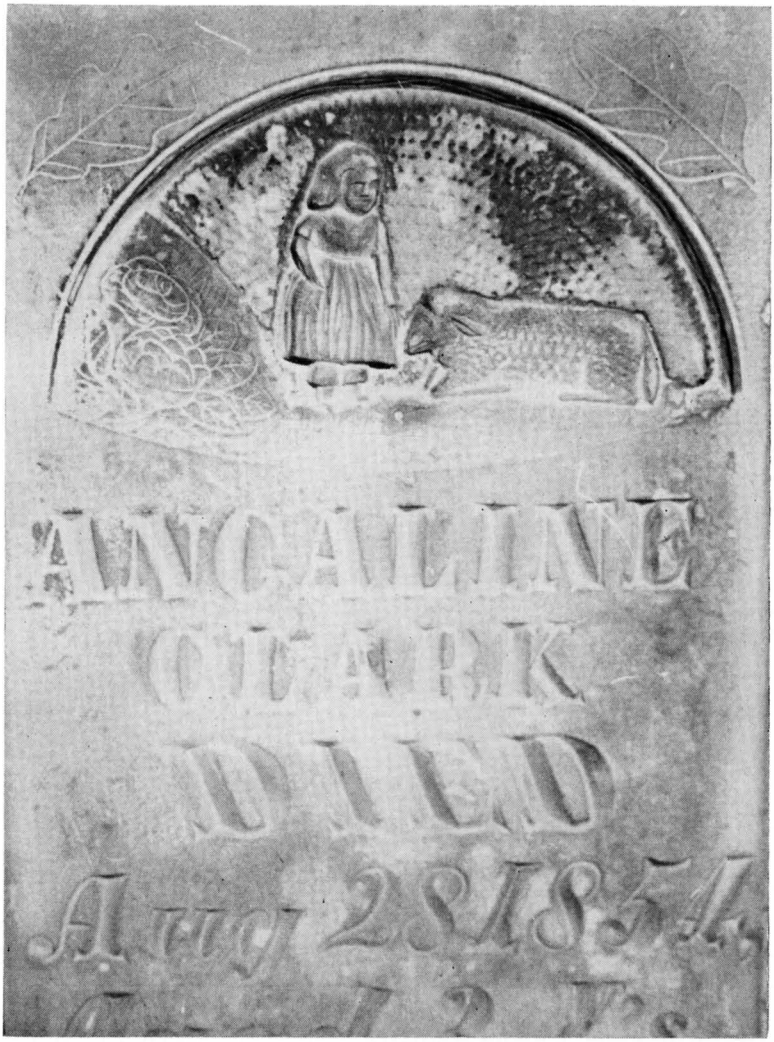

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Fig. 15. Monument for ANGALINE CLARK, Melott Cemetery, Pikes Peak, 1854

Attributed to Henry Cross

Marucha T. Hartley

Fig. 16. Monument for HANNAH CLARK, Melott Cemetery, Pikes Peak, 1855 *Signed H. Cross.* Hannah Clark was Henry Cross's mother-in-law.

quantity of work by my anonymous tombstone cutter made me feel that he had lived very close by. I still did not know his name. I had only the name C. Cross, but the exact relationship between that amateur carver and the unknown one was still a mystery.

To add to my uncertainty, there proved to be another Cross here entering the picture. This was Henry Cross.

First, there was his own tombstone (a marble one from a commercial establishment in Columbus) which dated his death in 1864. (See Fig. 17.) Second, there were two rather large monuments in memory of two infant sons of Henry and Mary Cross who had died in 1849. (See Fig. 18.) These were side by side . They were of sandstone but were not slabs. Each consisted of five separate stones placed on top of each other. They were most *unusally* large for infant gravestones.

These stones bore decorations which were related to those used by the anonymous carver. Now, the obvious questions were: what was the relationship, if any, between Henry Cross and C. Cross? And, was Henry Cross the same man as the H. Cross whose name appeared on the old milestone at Stone Head? And, did H. Cross make tombstones in addition to road markers?

The answer was not in this cemetery. I must ask questions and talk with more people. Accordingly, I returned to my car and continued driving north until I came to the hamlet of Pikes Peak. But rather than stopping there I decided to go on to Stone Head and see if the people who lived near it could help me.

The name on the mailbox by the Stone Head marker is J. A. Hendricks. I called out rather than going to the door to knock (a good idea in rural areas). There was a dog there but nobody answered my call. I waited around for several minutes and finally decided to leave. It was getting late and I thought I would return some other time.

Marucha T. Hartley

Fig. 17. Monument for HENRY CROSS, Melott Cemetery, Pikes Peak, 1864

Made by a commercial monument works, the stone is decorated with a hand pointing toward Heaven, the most stereotyped design used in the nineteenth century.

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Fig. 18. Monument for an infant son of Henry and Mary Cross, Melott Cemetery, Pikes Peak, 1849

Attributed to Henry Cross. This monument was created by Mr. Cross for his own child. Another like it, now defaced, stands nearby. It is likely that the two were erected for twins who died when only six days old.

Later that same spring I returned to Indiana and brought my wife and two children with me. When the first opportunity came, I returned to Stone Head in the hope of finding the Hendrickses at home. When I came to the place I was pleased to see them sitting in the yard. I parked and got out.

"Mr. Hendricks?" I called.

"Yes."

"I wanted to ask you about Stone Head," I began. Mr. Hendricks got up and walked toward me. He was elderly, with weather-browned skin and snow-white hair. His expression was almost amused.

"What do you want to know about it?" he said. At that point his wife, a small and rather frail woman, got up. She had been peeling some cucumbers. She remained several steps behind her husband and merely watched.

"Well," I answered, "I would like to know if H. Cross is Henry Cross."

"That's right," he answered.

"Is H. Cross any relation of C. Cross?" I continued.

"I don't know anybody by that name," he said.

I was a little crestfallen to hear that, but went on with my questioning. "Did Henry Cross make any other road markers besides this one?"

"He made three but this is the only one left," he said.

"Do you know where the others were located?"

"No."

"By any chance, did H. Cross make any tombstones?" I asked.

"I'd say he did. He made a lot of 'em."

"Where are they?"

"In the old cemeteries."

"Any in particular?"

"Mt. Zion and Melott."

"I've been to Mt. Zion. Where is Melott?"

"About a quarter of a mile south of Pikes Peak."

"On a hill and on the lefthand side of the road?"

"Yep."

"I guess that's the one I was exploring earlier this spring."

"You interested in cemeteries?"

"I've been trying to find out the name of a tombstone carver who lived around here. It must be Henry Cross unless there could have been another one working here at the same time," I said.

"Never heard of any other."

Mrs. Hendricks came up, handed me several cucumbers and then said to her husband, "Why don't you send him to talk to Otto?"

"Who is Otto?" I asked.

Mr. Hendricks said, "Otto Ping. He lives just below Melott Cemetery and across the road. He can tell you about Henry Cross."

I said thanks and dashed to the car.

The mailbox bearing the name Otto Ping is on the edge of a culvert at the side of the road very close to Melott Cemetery. The house is perhaps two hundred yards back from the road and is reached by a narrow drive. It is small and stands in a corner of a clearing. Behind the house there is a small garden. South of the house there is a corn field and beyond that a woods which presumably stretches for many miles across an area which closely recalls the Great Smoky Mountains.

I stopped the car just within shouting distance. A woman came to the front door and looked toward us. She seemed to be dubious.

"Mrs. Ping?" I called.

She nodded and took one step onto the porch.

"John Hendricks of Stone Head sent me to see you and Mr. Ping. He said you would tell me about Henry Cross," I said clearly.

The lady appeared to relax so I walked closer before continuing.

"What did you want to know?" she asked.

"Well, for one thing, I'd like to know where he lived."

"He lived here," she answered.

"Right here?" I asked in what I am afraid may have been a jubilant screech.

She nodded in the affirmative and then, looking toward our car, asked, "Is your family with you?"

"Yes, ma'am. My mother, father, wife, and two children." This evidently convinced her that I was a proper stranger.

"Ask them to come on up, and move your car closer to the house. It won't be so far for them to walk," she said.

We followed Mrs. Ping to the other side of the house. There was a swing hung from a tree limb and several chairs. "Have a seat," she said.

I could not wait to ask more questions.

My search for Henry Cross had ended!

II

WHO WAS HENRY CROSS?

When I consider the short duration of my life, swallowed up in the eternity before and after, the little space which I fill, and even can see, engulfed in the infinite immensity of space of which I am ignorant, and which knows me not, I am frightened, and am astonished being here rather than there, why now rather than then.

BLAISE PASCAL

THE STORY of the development of Indiana as a territory and a state has been frequently and eloquently told. We have our William Henry Harrison, Benjamin Harrison, Caleb B. Smith, Lew Wallace, Oliver P. Morton, and scores of others of notable achievement. But the quality of any period of time in our history must be limited, to an extent, by the character of the common people and the ordinary man. That quality is not the result of legislation, nor is it the result of the character of a small group of men or women. It is the result of thousands of people, virtually all forgotten, who contributed to this state because of their personal character, private sacrifices, and privations, because of their religious beliefs, their morality, their strong backs, their courage, and their skills. In the ledgers of history, they are largely nameless, faceless, anonymous.

Historians tell us that in 1850 there were living in Indiana over 450,000 persons who had emigrated there from other states or foreign lands. They arrived barefooted, wearing boots, riding on horses, riding in wagons, or pushing carts. The total population of Indiana in 1850 was nearing one million.

The answer to the question, Who was Henry Cross? is a most complex one.[7] It is not so much, perhaps, biographical as it is socio-historical, because it involves many people traveling from distant places, meeting for a brief span of years, and parting again. We can, as it were, hold a microscope over this infinitesimal segment of life and see not only events and people, but a kind of microcosm.

There must be a vagueness to some parts of this account because it has been fashioned from inadequate materials. Dates, names, places, and events are unknown or vaguely known, leaving us to surmise. But from old records of many kinds, we have gleaned enough absolute certainties to make the uncertainties supportable.

Among all those people who came to Indiana between 1820 and 1850, five are central to this narrative. Around them we shall weave a small fabric sixty years in length and as deep as a human life.

In some unknown year a tailor in Pennsylvania named Absalom Clark and his wife, Hannah, left their home to settle in Ohio. There, Absalom, a man in his early forties, opened a tailor shop and began life anew. This was in the decade of the 1820's, a time of a great deal of emigration. Absalom and Hannah remained in Ohio long enough to accumulate some money and to establish some roots. In 1828, a daughter, Mary, was born to them. When she was still quite small, Absalom and Hannah moved with her to Indiana. They lived first in Scottsburg and later moved farther north to Brown County.

The great, virgin country which was to become the world of Henry Cross was a rough-hewn region of forests, hills,

[7] See below, p. 166, for a list of sources from which biographical data on Henry Cross and his family was derived. Mr. and Mrs. Otto Ping, Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Hendricks, Mrs. Nellie Clark, and others of Brown County were very helpful, and Mr. and Mrs. Ping also gave us a guided tour of the Cross farm and stone quarry.

and valleys. Settlers were slow in moving into the area. Brown County did not become a separate political entity until 1836 when it was hacked out of those counties that had butted against each other in its heartland—Jackson, Bartholomew, and Monroe. Jacksonburg (now Nashville), laid out in 1836, became the county seat.

Van Buren Township, where Henry Cross was to spend his life, was created that same year and named in honor of Martin Van Buren, eighth president of the United States. A local historian writes that "here, as in other townships, white settlers began to arrive about 1820, and by 1830 a scattering of log cabins existed throughout the township. . . . Van Buren was called 'the garden spot of the county,' rich and fertile, ideal for wheat, corn, tobacco and fruit. It produced some of the most well-to-do farmers of the entire county.

"Because of its scattered population, communities did not develop in Van Buren until the 50's. Christiansburg was founded in 1850 by Thomas Carmichael. Pikes Peak was founded about the time of the Civil War; New Bellsville at a much later date; and Buffalo about the end of the Civil War."[8]

Such a place seems to be a highly unlikely spot for a tailor. But Absalom Clark, his wife, Hannah, and daughter, Mary, did go there to live. It was, of course, largely a homemade world. Clothing was made at home. Every cabin had a spinning wheel; many pioneers made their own dyes, processed their own wool, and made their own garments. Such a place as this was not ready for specialists. Particularly a tailor.

Historians have described these times as ones of hardship and unending labor. Even though the land was plentiful and cheap and the climate relatively healthful, life was arduous. Settlers lived in small (18 by 20 feet) cabins constructed on the spot of native timbers. Those cabins were chinked with mud, sticks, stones, and leaves. Many had dirt floors, leaky

[8] Ralph Burkholder, "The History of Nashville Lodge No. 135," in *A History of Brown County Masonry 1851-1962* [Nashville, Ind., 1962], pp. 8-9.

roofs, and cracks which admitted drafts, rain, and snow. Most of them were constructed without nails, cement, milled lumber, or glass.

The land itself had to be cleared of timber before it could be farmed. This entailed an almost perpetual job of girdling trees (to kill them), felling them, burning them, and then grubbing out the roots as well as the rocks and other obstacles to plowing and planting. The ox was the common work animal rather than the horse. The land was fertile and weeds grew as rapidly as crops, making a continual war with them an inevitable part of farming. If the weeds could be beaten back, then assaults by wild animals and wild fowl always threatened the extinction of the crops. Sometimes the squirrels, rabbits, mice, raccoons, and turkeys came in such great numbers that a settler had to scare them off by screaming and beating the ground with sticks.

Mary Clark, the daughter of a Pennsylvania tailor, and Henry Cross, the son of a pioneer Indiana settler, were to meet. But the early years are vaguely defined and uncertain. Even the exact ancestry of young Henry Cross is confused by a great deal of indistinct information which leads only to the necessity of supposition.

The earliest original land purchases in the area of Brown County were made in 1822. In that year a John Cross bought eighty acres of ground. He made subsequent purchases until he owned two hundred acres. Was he the father of Henry Cross?

Perhaps. But a William Cross bought forty acres of land in 1828, and more land until he owned some one hundred and sixty acres. Was he the father of Henry Cross? Or was it Solomon Cross who bought forty acres in 1834, and additional land in 1850 and 1852? Or, indeed, was it one of two dozen other pioneers named Cross who are shown by the census of 1820 and 1830 to have been in Indiana?

The most probable name to suggest is that of one Chester Cross, a man who was living in Jackson County (one of the

mother counties from which Brown was taken) in 1820. The census entry records him as a male between the ages of 26 and 45 who was married to a girl who was between 16 and 26. He was a head-of-family.

Henry Cross was born on or about August 1, 1821, in Indiana. He would name his first-born son Chester. Because the first Chester Cross was in the Brown County area just before Henry was born, it is more than probable that he was Henry Cross's father.

Who were Solomon, William, John, and Oliver Cross . . . all early landowners in Brown County? Because it seems unreasonable to say that all of these men with the same surname would buy land in the same county within a few years of each other out of mere happenstance, we can assume that they were brothers or cousins. It is of no real consequence, perhaps. They were there to farm. The land could be had for $1.25 an acre.

Working backwards, we begin with the known fact that Henry Cross, as an adult, was a highly skilled tombstone carver, sculptor, and mason. Inferentially, we know that he was trained by a professional. It is preposterous to suggest that he could have attained the degree of skill which he obviously had simply by self-instruction.

But who trained him?

We know that he lived in a wild, sparsely settled area. The only really plausible answer is that he learned it from his father. Sons have traditionally followed the trade or profession of their fathers. But whether his master was his father or not, we have seen the indisputable similarity between certain old gravestones in Columbus cemetery and those made by Henry Cross. If Chester Cross was in fact Henry's father, and *if* he was a professional tombstone carver, this would explain all of the uncertain elements which face us.

Did the elder Chester Cross live in Jackson County, farm, carve, make the early Columbus tombstones (1830-1850), and teach Henry Cross the trade?

No one knows.

Somewhere, somehow, Mary Clark and young Henry Cross met and fell in love. Perhaps they were neighbors. Perhaps they met at a church function or a meetin' . . . or a dance. We do not know, but it is not difficult to imagine a pretty young girl of fifteen having a romance with the young man of twenty-or-so who lived down the valley. He was young, strong, and skilled with his hands.

Henry and Mary were married on October 12, 1845, in a simple ceremony performed in Brown County by William Smith. He was twenty-four and she was but seventeen years of age. Two weeks later, Henry Cross bought a little over forty-one acres of land in Van Buren Township (SW¼ NW¼ S19 T8N R4E). Five years later the agricultural census lists him as the owner of 30 acres of improved and 94 acres of unimproved land valued at $800. In addition to raising corn and oats, he had the following livestock: 4 horses, 5 cattle, 30 sheep, and 18 hogs.

With the help of his friends and neighbors, Henry Cross built a cabin on a hilltop about a mile below the present-day hamlet of Pikes Peak. Then began what was to be a twenty-year period of enormous productivity, great labor, success, fulfillment, fruition, and then sudden tragedy.

The house which Henry Cross built for his bride was not a crude cabin. It had a double fireplace, a single fireplace, four sets of built-in cupboards, glass windows, a row of glass windows on either side of the front door, and a cellar. For many years it was considered to be one of the finest homes in Van Buren Township. (See Fig. 19.) It was home not only to the bride and groom, but also to the parents of the bride, Absalom and Hannah Clark, as well as to a young Timothy Clark. Within a mere fifteen years the real estate holdings of Henry Cross were listed as having a value of

Fig. 19. THE HENRY CROSS HOUSE

This structure was destroyed many years ago by fire. An unidentified man with an axe over his shoulder may be seen in front of the house. This picture is made from an old undated tintype found by Otto Ping.

$2,000, and the personal estate as $300. Henry Cross was not only economically successful, he was known for miles around as a farmer and as a fine craftsman.

The stone from which he fashioned his tombstones was quarried from a creek bed not far below the house and dragged by sled to the cellar of the house where he did his carving and shaping. (See Fig. 20.)

A son, Chester, was born to Henry and Mary Cross in 1847. In 1848, Ruah Anna, a daughter, was born and seven people lived in that household. For a brief few days, nine people lived there. Shortly before Christmas of 1849, Mary Cross gave birth to two infant sons. Sadly, they died after six days and were buried in the little cemetery a short distance up the road from the Cross house. This was the first, and almost overwhelming, blow sustained by this family of settlers.

To mark their graves, Henry Cross made two twin gravestones, each consisting of five separate stones, climaxed in a tall pyramid. These two grave markers were the only ones he ever made which were placed on huge stone footings. All the others were smaller, were placed directly in earth, and were less impressive in size and in complexity. Only one other tombstone is even comparable, that which Mr. Cross made earlier the same year for one George Spriggs who was buried in the churchyard at South Bethany.

These two pyramidal stones were, of course, a labor of love. The fact that his most ambitious work was made in behalf of his two infant sons indicates something of the character and the sensitivity of the man. Oddly, the three years immediately following this double loss were years in which Mr. Cross made his most notable sculptures in terms of both design and craftsmanship.

Late in the year 1850, another daughter, Elizabeth, was born. At about the same time, Henry Cross began work on the road marker now known as the Stone Head. It has proved to

Fig. 20. HENRY CROSS'S QUARRY

This source for the stone used by Henry Cross for his tombstones and the Stone Head may still be seen a short distance from the Otto Ping house. Henry Cross's cellar workshop has been filled with dirt, but it is said that many unfinished tombstones and his tools are buried there. Mrs. Otto Ping is seated at the center of the picture which was taken by her husband in the 1930's.

be the most conspicuous of all of his creations and, at the same time, the one which has emerged after more than a century of existence as a rare and homely memento of the early years of Indiana history.

It has a particularly important place in the personal chronicle of Henry Cross's creative life. The Stone Head is one of only two surviving works which he is known to have signed. It is one of only two in-the-round surviving sculptures (as opposed to relief carvings) which he created. It is the only surviving work which he made in behalf of the county (as opposed to private individuals).

In respect to its execution, certain aspects of it relate it to the three symmetrical willow trees which may be seen on headstones made for Anne Dietez (1849) and Joseph Carter (1849) in Columbus, and for George R. Godson (1852) at Old Harmony Burial Ground. Specifically, a close inspection of the back and sides of the hair on Stone Head will show that the mode of representation is quite similar to that of the foliage of the three headstones just mentioned. Both hair and foliage are conceived as sets of semitubular forms which run parallel, giving the effect rather of cascading water. This, added to the carver's penchant for using a narrow straight-chisel for texture, becomes an important identifying mark of the style of the artist.

Of some interest are the names of the four towns which were carved on the base of the marker: Indianapolis, Columbus, Fairfax, and Sparkesferie. The first two places are still prominent. Today no one in the vicinity of Stone Head has ever heard of either Fairfax or Sparkesferie. But in those days both were prominent. Ferries were an important part of travel routes. People coming north from southern Indiana would have to cross either the Muscatatuck River or White River. The Beem Ferry was located at the mouth of Cedar Creek; the Kindred Ferry near the mouth of Wood Creek. Peck's Ferry and Huffington's Ferry crossed White River about half a mile below the mouth of the Muscatatuck. Stephen

Sparks's Ferry on the Muscatatuck was in operation in 1851 and remained active at least until the late seventies. On it, a man on foot could cross the river for 6¼ cents. A horseman could cross for 12½ cents and a loaded wagon and five horses for 62½ cents.

Six years after Stone Head was erected the village of Sparksville was platted and surveyed by Charles Rosenbaum and Thomas Carr.

Fairfax, like Sparks's Ferry, or Sparkesferie, was an important location. It was begun around 1835 when two men named Wilson and Whisenand opened a liquor establishment in Clear Creek Township in Monroe County near the present site of Smithville. Besides the saloon, there were a gristmill and a meat-packing company. In the 1850's Fairfax was a lively community of promise.

Local tradition has it that three road markers similar to Stone Head were made. Only the marker at Stone Head, the hamlet, has survived. It is thought that the markers were made as a substitute for the common road labor which was, in those days, levied on all adult men. Six days a year were required while a man was able-bodied. It is assumed that arrangements were made between Henry Cross and the local county road supervisor to substitute the creation of carved markers for ordinary labor. No records of any payment to Mr. Cross for this project have been found.

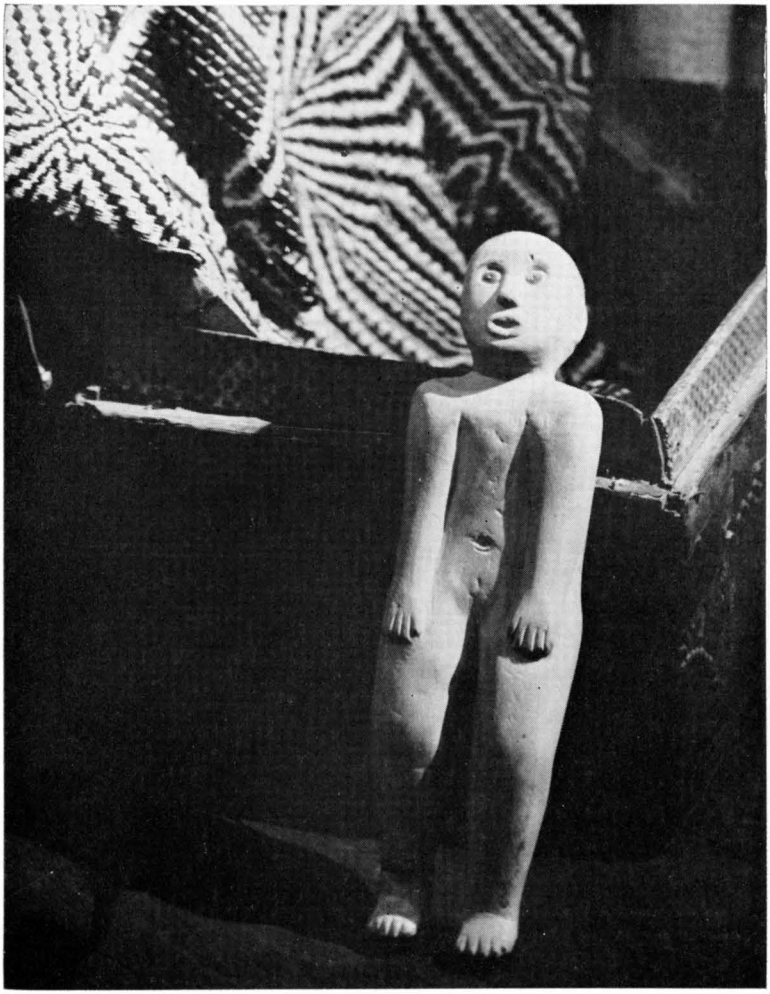
In 1852 Henry Cross made the previously discussed willow tree monument for George R. Godson, located at Harmony. Also, he created the monument for George Spriggs at South Bethany. His annual production appears to have been about six tombstones, each having been quarried from the creek bed, shaped, smoothed, decorated, and lettered in his cellar workshop. During the approximately fifteen years in which he worked actively as a part-time tombstone carver he produced nearly a hundred stones. Inasmuch as he was basically occupied

with farming, this volume seems to be reasonable, assuming that the carvings were done primarily during long winter nights after the daily chores had been completed.

In 1853 another daughter, Hannah, was born, making four living children. For her, or for one of the other girls, Mr. Cross carved a stone doll from the sandstone in the quarry. (See Fig. 21.) It was fifteen inches in length, weighed about seven pounds, and was tinted to a skin color and had brown eyes and dark hair. It showed wear from being cradled in a child's arms. While it was, of course, not signed, there is every reason to accept it as being from his hand. The doll is remarkably similar to the Stone Head in style and execution. The manner in which the eyes were rendered in both is identical. And it is reasonable to expect that a man who made such elaborate tombstones for his dead children would also create for the living ones. The doll has survived a century and has become a most poignant memento of the love a man of long ago had for his daughters.

July and August of the following year, 1854, were particularly scarred by illness and death in the valley of Little Blue Creek. Some years were worse than others. In July, Absalom Clark, the father of Mary Cross, died. He was seventy-five years of age. On the 28th of August little Angaline Clark died. She was three. Angaline's tombstone was decorated with a representation of a small girl in long dress and pantaloons standing by a lamb. It is one of the most picturesque of all of Mr. Cross's carvings.

That same year, there were deaths in the families of the Campbells, the Wilsons, and the Homeses. Henry Cross made the tombstones. The two for the Wilsons and the Campbells are a unique pair in design and are the only stones by Mr. Cross which used symbolic representations for water (a death symbol) and the hour glass. Both, however, seem to have been



Illinois State University

Fig. 21. STONE DOLL, c. 1845

Attributed to Henry Cross. It was secured by the author in an antique collection in Nashville.

whitewashed either to preserve them or to make them resemble white marble.

Eight months after Absalom Clark died, his wife, Hannah, followed him. She was just over sixty-nine years of age. Her tombstone, carved by Mr. Cross, is the only one known which he signed. For this reason it has particular significance in identifications of other tombstones where the authorship might be in question. The stone which Mr. Cross made for his wife's mother has many of his familiar devices: leaves, pillars, a Bible, tiny textured designs, and a wealth of chisel marks. Inasmuch as leaves were highly individual in Cross sculptures, it is fairly easy to identify other unsigned stones by a careful study of any leaves that might appear. The details in the Hannah Clark monument and those in the Stone Head, both signed, make it possible to authenticate almost every monument found during this long search which we had attributed to the "Anonymous Carver of Harmony."

The question which must be asked is, why did Henry Cross choose to sign only these two pieces of work? No answer can be given. But it presents an intriguing clue to the inner character of the man.

An examination of Henry Cross's work gives grim evidence of the devastation which diseases wrought on families. Three stones near each other in Mt. Zion show that Susannah Price, the twelve-year-old daughter of Evrith and Catharine Price, died just eight days before Christmas, 1857. On the last day of December her father died, and in early January, her mother, Catharine, died also. These people must have been friends or neighbors of the Cross family.

The headstone for Catharine Price is of special interest because it is the earliest tombstone found which is signed, "C. Cross." The question has been asked, who was C. Cross? Chester, Henry Cross's son, was at that time (1858) eleven years old. It is just possible that, with help, he could have made a tombstone, assuming that his father did the heavy work of quarrying and shaping. The quality of design and lettering on the Catharine Price headstone are appreciably *below* that

Fig. 22. WILLIAM PING, at the left, a witness of the Cross tragedy, shown with four of his younger relatives, sometime in the nineties

of Mr. Cross. Inasmuch as young children in pioneer days did many chores that were exacting, it is within the realm of probability that Chester did indeed do enough of the work on this stone to warrant having his name on it.

In any case, the variation in the quality of the work in Mt. Zion alone is such that one must assume that two men's work is represented there.

In 1857, Olive, a daughter, was born into the Cross family. In 1860, Mary Frances was born. Julia Azubah (Zubie), the last of the Cross children, was born in 1863.

At the time Henry Cross was forty-two years old, a successful farmer and an accomplished stone carver. He had had nine children, of whom seven were living.

Since Henry Cross had acquired his land in 1845 he had been gradually clearing it and preparing it for planting. On February 26, 1864, he was felling and burning trees with the help of William Ping, a Mr. Moore, and a Mr. King. Suddenly tragedy descended. One of the great fiery trees fell over, pinning Henry Cross beneath it. The three other men came rushing up as he lay in the snow, helpless beneath the burning trunk. They managed to free him before the fire reached him and carried him across the road into his house. But his injuries were fatal, and death came almost immediately.

Henry Cross was buried in a simple wooden coffin which cost $4.50. He left his widow, Mary, 36, his son Chester, 17, and six daughters, Ruah Anna, 16; Elizabeth, 14; Hannah, 11; Olive, 7; Mary Frances, 4, and the baby Julia. His grave is next to those of his two infant sons whom he had buried thirteen years before. And they are there, side by side, still. The others were scattered to distant places.

It is ironic that the "first artist" of Brown County, famed as an art center, has been totally neglected, unrecognized, and forgotten. It is also ironic that the old pioneer who had made so many tombstones for others should have his own grave marked by a stereotyped stone which in time has been broken and its three main parts lean haphazardly against the stub.

III

EPILOGUE

WHAT remains of this story is epilogue. Chester Cross seems to have tried to continue on his own as a part-time tombstone carver. Headstones attributable to him dated after the death of his father may be found in several Brown County churchyards. The most competent, done for George Kreitser in 1866, when Chester was nearly twenty years old, is quite skilled. Evidently he did what he could to assume the headship of the Cross household.

The months immediately after the death of the father were uncertain and hectic. The estate was continued in the Brown County Probate Court for more than three years. Faced with too much responsibility, bereft of her parents and her husband, Mary Cross left Indiana and the hills that had been her home. She took her children and returned to the place of her birth: Jackson County, Ohio. On March 31, 1866, she was married to Hamilton Stewart in a ceremony performed by Armstead Scurlock, a justice of the peace.

On May 30, 1871, Randall R. Russell was appointed guardian of the Cross children. There were then but five daughters, Ruah Anna, Hannah, Olive, Mary Frances, and Zubie. All of the daughters were eventually married in Ohio.

Hannah married Hugh McDaniel on September 30, 1873.

Just a month later, Chester married Rachel Lynch, on October 29, 1873. Chester's bride was about four years his elder and had had a daughter by previous marriage, born in 1870. Rachel and Chester Cross had four children, Henry Cross, May, Grace, and Ethel. Chester was evidently farming at this time. He had purchased eight hundred dollars' worth of land in Bloomfield Township, Jackson County (Ohio) in Decem-

ber, 1870. Chester and his wife sold five hundred dollar's worth of land in Jackson Township in the same county in 1879.

On February 18, 1874, Ruah Anna, the oldest daughter of Henry and Mary Cross, married Aaron Henson. They had three sons, Harry, Albert, and Earl.

On the 10th of January, 1876, Olive Cross married R. E. Cackley. No children are known to have resulted from this marriage.

Hetzal Hartley

Fig. 23. Rubbings of the signatures of Henry and Chester Cross on tombstones carved and signed by them

Mary Frances, the next-to-youngest daughter of Henry and Mary Cross, married George H. Rupp, Jr., on January 1, 1883. One child, George, was born in October of that year.

The baby, Azubah, known affectionately as Zubie, married William Campbell on February 16, 1883. William and Zubie had a son in December of that year.

On Christmas Eve, 1916, Mary Cross died. She was in her eighty-ninth year. Three years later, Ruah Anna, then seventy-two years of age, died and was buried near her mother

in the old Clay Cemetery in Franklin Township, Jackson County, Ohio.

Chester Cross "went west" in some year that is not known to us. Among the papers filed in connection with the estate of his wife, Rachel, is the information that Chester settled in Mack's Creek, Camden County, Missouri. With him were his four children: Henry, May, Grace, and Ethel. The papers dated 1913 indicated that all the children were then "over twenty-one" years of age.

Rachel Cross, Chester's wife, died on March 18, 1913, at the age of sixty-nine years. She was buried in Fairmount Cemetery, Jackson County, Ohio.

The details of Chester's last years are not known. But his descendants are still living in or near Montreal, Missouri.

Like pieces of floating cork, Henry Cross and Mary Clark were deposited next to each other by the tide of humanity which washed across the nation in the early years of the nineteenth century. Their lives were partially shaped by the Great Migration and by the physical fact of the wilderness in which they found themselves.

We see little evidence that the most dramatic event of the century, the Civil War, touched them very intimately. They were in a relatively isolated region, preoccupied by the demands made on them by a raw land, busy with the care of both the young and the old. They were scarred by death and disease. Henry Cross was the victim of the wilderness, and perhaps, indirectly, by weariness which resulted from his unending struggle with it. On that land of Van Buren Township he spilled not only his sweat, but his blood.

Mary, his wife, twice uprooted, was the Godchild of the Great Migration. When she departed from Indiana in 1866 to return to the scene of her youth, she was reacting against the unseen force which had helped make her what she was. She

migrated in reverse, leaving behind much of what the frontier had given her.

The lives of these few obscure people show in a homely way how the great social and historic upheavals bend and shape the human beings who are caught up by them.

Van Buren Township was a square-shaped area about eight miles wide and nine miles from top to bottom. It comprised the valleys formed by Salt Creek, Christiansburg Creek, Little Blue Creek, their tributaries, and the hills surrounding them. In the early days, there were no towns, only the seeds of towns: a church, a burying ground, a meetinghouse, a mill, or a general store.

It is rather odd that no Cross tombstones were found in Nashville, the Brown County seat. It was platted in 1837 and by 1860 had a population of over two hundred. It was known as a wicked town with gambling, drinking, fighting, and horse racing.

Henry Cross must have spent a great deal of time traveling those dusty roads up and down the hills and through the valleys to put up his stone tablets.

Even today, in an automobile, it takes an unbelievably long time to go two or three miles through the semiwilderness of the hill country. Many roads ford creeks and those fords are occasionally impassable. With a wagon and team it must have taken hours to go from one hamlet or village to another. The distance from the Cross house to Elkinsville is only about three miles. By existing roads it must be more than twice that distance. A man in a wagon would have to leave home at dawn, take his lunch, and only hope to be back by dark. From October to May many roads were almost impossible for a wagon. So we know that many tombstones were put in place in the mild months of early spring, summer, and fall.

Henry Cross was one of the last of the old-time carvers. He worked without any real training in sculpture. Nature was

his model and his own imagination supplied him with many motifs. His powers of invention were almost limitless and the sensitivity of his work is remarkable.

The land he was clearing at the time of his death has since grown up in timber. A corn field south of the site of his house still produces corn and his quarry still stands. Most of the graveyards within fifteen miles of his homestead still have examples of his work, many of them sharp of detail and relatively unharmed by a century of exposure to the elements.

The landscape has perhaps changed little since the time, so long ago, when he made his way with wagon and team over the roads to Pleasant Valley, Mt. Zion, and South Bethany with his new-cut tombstones, his pick, his shovel, and lunch for himself and his son.

Many of those places have withered and gone to seed. Fairfax and Sparkesferie are forgotten except on the base of Stone Head whose hands still point the way for the traveler who is no more to the destinations which are no more.

For a long time, I wondered what Henry Cross was like as a person. I could see what kind of work he did, but that did not tell me what kind of a man he was. But now I know. He was a kind of amalgam of the people I had been talking to in *his* country for the past two or three years: hard-working, God-fearing, polite, and friendly. He had a clean face, mud on his boots, and callouses on his hands.

This was Henry Cross.

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W. DOUGLAS HARTLEY,
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NORMAL, ILLINOIS
May, 1965

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

W. Douglas Hartley was born in Indianapolis in 1921, graduated from Columbus, Indiana, High School, and received the B. S. and M. F. A. degrees from Indiana University, and the M. F. A. degree from Kansas City Art Institute. He served in the U. S. Air Force from 1942 to 1945. Mr. Hartley's sculptures include busts of Dr. William Lowe Bryan, former president of Indiana University, Dr. Frank H. Sparks, former president of Wabash College, and Mr. Q. G. Noblitt of Arvin Industries, Columbus. He also created the 4-ton Madonna and Child sculpture for St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, Bloomington, Illinois. Since 1954 Mr. Hartley has been Assistant Professor of Art at Illinois State University, Normal, Illinois.

Old Friends Help Dolph Cross 'Observe' His 80th

S FEB 6 1975

Biography Community Affairs File

"With birthdays, like so many other things, you don't celebrate, you just observe at 80," said Dolph Cross Wednesday as old friends joined him at lunch at the Elks club to recognize the occasion.

Cross, local funeral director who resides at 2005 N. 13th St., is known for his lifetime interest in Masonic Lodge affairs — he has long been treasurer Terre Haute Lodge No. 19 — and also for his interest in the church his father once served as pastor. This the former Maple Avenue Christian, now Maplewood Christian.

Of the group that joined him for lunch Wednesday Cross relates that it started meeting together at the Elks in the summer of 1970. At the first meeting, he recalls, there were present Herman Canine, Art Long, Dick Cross, son of Dolph; plus two more persons who cannot now be identified.

The Wednesday meetings have continued and, according to Dolph "There are always so many important topics to discuss and decisions to be made that we have not yet thought of bylaws, in fact, we don't even have a name. The hostess did, however, once refer to them as the Sunshine Boys. We usually have about 14 present; the most at any time was 18."

The group, he further explains, actually has no organization, no officers, no dues and no program other than to eat lunch.

A total of 17, plus Dolph, turned out Wednesday for the birthday event, which was observed without a program.

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

Community Affairs File
Vigo County Public Library
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Bio. Cross, Dolph

HELP CROSS MARK HIS 80TH—Old friends who regularly have lunch together joined to help Dolph Cross, local funeral director, mark his 80th birthday anniversary Wednesday at the Elks club. Cross is seated at the head of the table with a single lighted candle at his right—80 candles were ruled out as depleting the national energy reserves. (Photo by Kadel)